LITURGICAL CATECHISM

The Church, The Mass, The Year

BY

REV. M. S. MacMAHON

Vice-President and Professor of Sacred Liturgy
Holy Cross College, Clonliffe, Dublin

Dublin
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Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we also are (St. John xvii. 11.)

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To

Our Lady of Lourdes

AND TO

The Little Flower

(*Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus*)

I Dedicate this Work

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PREFACE

THE purport of this Liturgical Catechism is to promote the ideals of Pius X—a saintly Pope, whose tomb is fast becoming one of the most popular shrines in Rome and whose life-work is surely proving to be one of the grandest inspirations of our age. He was truly an *ignis ardens*. He had a heart enkindled with the fire of divine love and a mind illumined with the light of divine wisdom. Moved by a burning desire "to restore all things in Christ," he saw with clear and steady vision that the indispensable means of informing the world with the spirit of Christ was the active participation of the faithful in the sacred mysteries of our religion. To him participation in the Liturgy was the hope of mankind. To him the Mass was the rallying point of the spiritual forces of the world. Should this Catechism help, no matter how slightly, to awaken or to intensify interest in the Liturgy of the Church, should it lead, no matter how faintly, to a better understanding of the Mass, it will have achieved its end and aim.

I beg to return thanks to Messrs. Burns, Oates and Washbourne for their kind permission to use their *Roman* (Latin-English) *Missal* throughout, to Messrs. M. H. Gill & Son for placing their *Voice of the Church* (English) at my disposal, and to the many clerical friends who have given me valuable assistance in the compilation of this work.

M. S. MACMAHON.

Nativity of St. John the Baptist, 1926.

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CONTENTS

PAGE

DEDICATION iii

PREFACE v

BIBLIOGRAPHY vii

INDEX 301

INTRODUCTION

CHAP.

I. LITURGY 1

VALUE OF LITURGICAL PRAYER . . . 7

FORMS OF LITURGICAL WORSHIP . . . 8

MEANS OF ACQUIRING THE SPIRIT OF LITURGY 9

II. CATHOLIC RITES 11

Eastern Uniats, 12; Western Rites, 13; Liturgical Languages, 13; Latin, the Language of Roman Rite, 14.

SECTION I.—THE CHURCH

III. CHURCHES AND ORATORIES 15

Classification of Churches, 16; Basilicas, 17; Classification of Oratories, 18; Various parts of a Church, 20.

IV. THE CHRISTIAN ALTAR 22

Classification of Altars, 23; Constituents of an Altar, 23; the Titular of an Altar, 25; Ornaments of the Altar (Ciborium, Baldakin, Tabernacle, Cross, Candlesticks, Retable), 26. [Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament, 29.]

VARIOUS OTHER FEATURES OF A CHURCH . 32

V. SACRED VESSELS AND UTENSILS . . . 36

VI. THE LITURGICAL LINEN 42

VII. LITURGICAL VESTMENTS 47

LITURGICAL COLOURS 48

A. VESTMENTS OF PRIESTS AND OF INFERIOR MINISTERS 49

VESTMENTS COMMON TO DIGNITARIES, PRIESTS AND CLERICS . . . 58

B. INSIGNIA OF A BISHOP 61

C. INSIGNIA OF AN ARCHBISHOP . . . 68

D. INSIGNIA OF THE POPE 72

VIII. LITURGICAL BOOKS 74

CHAP.	SECTION II.—THE MASS	PAGE
IX.	THE ASPERGES	82
	THE VARIOUS TYPES OF MASSES . . .	84
	THE MASS OF THE CATECHUMENS . .	87
	Prayers at the foot of the Altar, 88 ; Introit, 89 ; *Kyrie, eleison*, 90 ; *Gloria in excelsis*, 91 ; Collect, 91 ; Lessons, 93 ; Epistle, 94 ; Gradual, 94 ; Alleluiatic Verse, 95 ; Tract, 96 ; Sequence, 96 ; Gospel, 97 ; Nicene Creed, 98.	
X.	THE MASS OF THE FAITHFUL . . .	99
	THE OFFERTORY	99
XI.	THE PREFACE AND SANCTUS . . .	108
XII.	THE CANON	112
	(1) Prayers before the Consecration, 114 ; (2) the Words of Consecration, 123 ; (3) Prayers after the Consecration, 126.	
XIII.	THE COMMUNION	139
	Pater Noster, 142 ; *Libera*, 143 ; Breaking of the Bread, 145 ; (the *Sancta*, 146 ; the *Fermentum*, 146) ; Mingling of the Species, 149 ; the *Agnus Dei*, 150 ; the Kiss of Peace, 151 ; Prayers after the *Agnus Dei*, 152 ; the *Panem Cœlestem*, 153 ; the *Domine, non sum dignus*, 153.	
	THE COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL . .	154
	Communion in the Early Church, 156 ; Communion under two Species, 156 ; Communion under one Species, 157.	
	LITURGICAL THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION	158
	The *Quod ore sumpsimus*, 159 ; the *Corpus tuum*, 159.	
	THE COMMUNIO	160
	THE POST-COMMUNION	161
	PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE (*Oratio super populum*)	162
XIV.	THE CONCLUSION OF THE MASS . . .	164
	The *Ite, Missa est*, 164 ; (*Benedicamus Domino*, 165 ; *Requiescant in pace*, 165) ; the *Placeat*, 166 ; the Blessing, 167 ; the Last Gospel, 168 ; *De Profundis*, 170.	
	PRAYERS IN LATIN OR IN THE VERNACULAR .	171
	THANKSGIVING PRAYERS OF THE PRIEST AFTER MASS	171

CHAP. PAGE

XV. Solemn High Mass 173
Missa Cantata 177
Pontifical High Mass at the Throne . 177
Pontifical High Mass at the Faldstool . 178
Papal Pontifical Mass 178

XVI. Mass of the Dead 180
Various formularies, 180; Sequence, 180; Preface, 181; Privileged days, 181; Differences between Mass of the Dead and Ordinary Mass, 182; the three Masses on All Souls' Day, 183.
Exequial Mass 183
The Absolution, 185; Burial Service—*In Paradisum*, 185; the *Benedictus*, 186; the *De Profundis*, 186.
Gregorian Masses 186

XVII. Sacred Music 187

APPENDIX TO SECTION II
Ceremonies to be observed by the faithful at—
I. Low Mass 190
II. Solemn High Mass 191
III. Solemn Mass "de Requiem" . . . 192

SECTION III.—THE LITURGICAL YEAR

XVIII. The Liturgical Year—Its Meaning, Development and Significance . . 193

XIX. The Christian Week 200

XX. Quarter-Tense 202

XXI. The Christmas Cycle—
A. Advent 205
(Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 207).
B. Christmas 208
(St. Stephen, St. John the Evangelist, Holy Innocents, 210; Feast of the Circumcision, 210; Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, 210).
C. Epiphany 211
Purification of the B. V. Mary . . 213

CHAP.		PAGE
XXII.	THE PASCHAL CYCLE	216
	A. SEPTUAGESIMAL PERIOD	216
	B. LENT IN GENERAL	219
	Ash Wednesday, 227 ; Sundays in Lent to Passiontide, 228 ; Passiontide, 231.	
XXIII.	(1) HOLY WEEK	234
	(2) PALM SUNDAY AND THE OPENING FERIALS OF HOLY WEEK	235
	(3) TENEBRÆ	240
	(4) LAST DAYS OF HOLY WEEK	242
	HOLY THURSDAY	243
XXIV.	THE CHRISTIAN PASCH	250
	GOOD FRIDAY	250
XXV.	HOLY SATURDAY	259
XXVI.	EASTERTIDE	272
	EASTER AND ITS OCTAVE	273
	Low Sunday, 276 ; Good Shepherd Sunday, 276	
	ROGATION DAYS	277
	THE ASCENSION	278
XXVII.	PENTECOST	280
	Vigil of Pentecost, 282.	
	PERIOD AFTER PENTECOST	283
XXVIII.	FEASTS OF THE CHURCH	286
	VARIOUS CLASSIFICATION OF FEASTS	286
	FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY	288
	FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI	288
	FEAST OF THE SACRED HEART	292
	FEAST OF JESUS CHRIST, KING	293
	FEASTS OF OUR BLESSED LADY	296
	CULT OF THE SAINTS	298
	FEASTS OF ST. JOSEPH	299

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I

LITURGY

Q. *What is the origin of the word Liturgy ?*

A. Liturgy comes from the Greek word "*leitourgia*" (*leiton*—public, and *ergon*—work), which signified any public service performed by a citizen on behalf of the State.

Q. *How is Liturgy defined in the Catholic sense ?*

A. Liturgy is the public worship of the Church. It is that form of piety which is practised by the Church in fulfilment of its mission to praise and glorify the Blessed Trinity and to sanctify souls.

The Greek Church restricts the term "liturgy" to the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which is the outstanding act of public worship.

Q. *In virtue of what power does the Church give praise and glory to God and promote the sanctification of souls ?*

A. In virtue of the sacerdotal power of Christ, which is the source of all supernatural life, and with which Christ Himself has endowed the Church.

The Church is the Living Christ, and therefore in its Liturgy it continues the prayer of Christ to His Eternal Father during His life on earth, expresses in gesture, symbol, and word the silent prayer of Jesus in the Tabernacle, and echoes the prayer and praise of the Sacred Humanity Which sits "at the right-hand of the Father."

Q. *What are the essential characteristics of every act of liturgical worship?*

A. 1. It is a public act of worship paid to God.

2. It is an act performed in the name of and on behalf of the whole Christian people.

3. It is an act accomplished by a duly accredited minister, one who is specially deputed by the Church to carry out the divine worship, which the Church, as a society, renders to God.

Q. *Of what does this worship of the Church mainly consist?*

A. It consists of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, of the Divine Office, of the Sacraments, sacramentals and processions.

Q. *How may we derive the greatest benefits from these manifold acts of public worship?*

A. By our active participation in them; for it is in our active participation in them that we come most directly under the influence of the sacerdotal power of Christ exercised in the Liturgy.

Q. *What does this active participation imply?*

A. It implies that we should unite with the whole Church in offering up the Holy Sacrifice, unite with the Church in the other forms of liturgical worship and prayer at which we may assist, and unite with the Church in its celebration of the mysteries of Our Lord's life in the round of the liturgical year.

Q. *Is this life of prayer in common with the Church mere association in prayer?*

A. It is something far higher. The life of prayer in common with the Church proceeds from our being members of the Church, that is, of the Mystical Body of Christ, and from our conscious association with that Body and with its Head, Who is Christ, in offering up homage to God.

Q. To what would the general adoption of active participation in the Church's Liturgy lead ?

A. It would transform society. Pope Pius X stated that it is the indispensable means of spreading the spirit of Christ throughout the world.

Q. Was this ideal participation in the liturgy of the Church, which was sought after by Pope Pius X, ever realized in the history of the Church ?

A. It was realized in the life of the early Christians who " were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles and in the communication of the breaking of bread and in prayers " (Acts ii. 42). It was their daily routine to assemble together for liturgical prayer, to partake in common of the *Agape*, to unite in the offering up of the Holy Sacrifice and partake of the Victim in Holy Communion. They acted consciously as members of the one Church, having one faith, one sacrifice, one holy Bread, one prayer, alike in all. All prayed together as one great family. The Catholics of every city formed one community, gathered around the Bishop who was the head. The Bishop was the true Father of the faithful of his diocese, who looked up to him for spiritual guidance and obeyed his every word. He was the bond of union with the Apostles. He was the guardian of sacred tradition and the representative of ecclesiastical authority. To follow him was to be on the right way. To pray with him in liturgical service was to pray in conscious union with the Church.

Q. What was the result of this life in common in the case of the Early Christians ?

A. " They received into their veins the life-blood of fraternal charity." " And the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul " (Acts iv. 32). Were not the very pagans forced to cry out : " See those Christians how they love one another " (*cf.* Panfoeder).

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No one prayed for himself alone. Each one in the liturgical functions was raised above all that was merely personal. All together formed one Body. Compare the Secret of the Mass of the Sixth Sunday after Pentecost: "that what each does offer in honour of Thy name may avail for the salvation of all."

It was in their active participation in the Mass that the Early Christians acquired the strength and courage to shed their blood in defence of the faith, for the Mass is "that Sacrifice from which martyrdom receives its whole beginning" (Secret of the Mass of Thursday after the Third Sunday of Lent).

Q. *May we hope for a renewal of the glories of these ancient days?*

A. It is but the literal truth to state that every Mass at which we assist is calculated so to renew the face of the earth. See a priest at the altar: he exchanges greetings frequently and carries on a dialogue with the faithful who are represented by the server, prays in the plural in union with the faithful, offers up the Holy Sacrifice in their name and in his own, calls the Sacrifice both his and theirs, and when, through the power of his priesthood, he consecrates the bread and wine in the person of Christ, he offers up the consecrated gifts with the faithful in union with Christ's offering up of Himself, partakes of the Victim offered up and makes the faithful partakers of it, too, in Holy Communion.

Were the faithful as consciously and as closely united with the priest as the prayers of the Mass assume, and were priest and faithful to unite the offering of themselves with Christ's offering of Himself upon the altar in the spirit and in the way the liturgy of the Mass provides, the Kingdom of Christ would come upon the earth, for the Mass is "the source of all holiness" (the Secret of the Mass of St. Ignatius, 31st July).

Q. How does Pius X summarise his whole teaching on this point?

A. We must "pray the Mass": we must "live the Mass."

Q. What is meant by "praying the Mass?"

A. We pray the Mass in reciting the prayers of the Missal or prayers equivalent to them. That is the normal way of uniting ourselves with the priest at the altar. We must not consider the Mass as affording us a convenient opportunity of practising our private devotions. As members of the Church we should take an active part in the Holy Sacrifice, which the Church, as a society, offers up to the Blessed Trinity, through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ.

Q. What is meant by "living the Mass?"

A. It means that at every Mass we should offer up ourselves in sacrifice, our life, our will, our hopes, our joys, our sorrows, and prolong that offering of ourselves through all our day, from Mass to Mass, so as to link every moment of our day to the daily or weekly sacrifice. From this intimate union of our sacrifice of ourselves with the Infinite Sacrifice Christ offers to His Eternal Father upon the altar is derived all that makes for our sanctification. Each day, for instance, has its trials. We offer these with ourselves at the altar. When the moment of trial comes the Holy Mass procures for us the necessary graces to endure or to overcome.

To spur us on to this high purpose of "living the Mass" we should ever bear in mind that every day we, as members of the mystical Body of Christ, are offered up in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to the glory of the Blessed Trinity in union with the offering Christ makes of Himself upon the altar.

Q. Where are the various forms of liturgical worship and prayer to be found?

A. They are to be found in the liturgical books (*v.* p. 74).

Q. *In the practice of liturgical prayer are we to lay aside our private prayers?*

A. By no means. There remain the command and the promise of Christ. "But thou, when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret: and thy Father who seeth thee in secret will repay thee" (Math. vi. 6).

The needs of our souls are manifold, and some cannot be discerned or satisfied except in private prayer. It is in our meditations, our examinations of conscience, in many a private prayer and retreat that we best study and know ourselves, our personal dispositions, passions and wants.

Q. *How are the two species of prayer related?*

A. Private prayers—meditation, morning and evening prayer, the Rosary, etc.—prepare the soul for the better participation in liturgical prayer by awakening that attention, recollection and intimate ardour which give life and animation to our use of the set forms of the liturgy; liturgical prayer gives the right direction to private prayer, guarding it against the spirit of illusion and of error, penetrating it with the spirit of dogma, the basic element of all true devotion.

Q. *Is the practice of liturgical prayer opposed to popular devotions?*

A. Just as little as it is opposed to private prayer. Popular devotions, that are approved of by the Church, have an inestimable value: "For where there are two or three gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Math. xviii. 20).

Popular devotions tend to develop the spirit of prayer in common—the ideal of the liturgy; while liturgical prayer, as it does with private prayer,

guards popular devotions against all danger of excess or extravagance.

Q. *From the point of view of efficacy and of power, how does liturgical prayer compare with all other forms of prayer?*

A. Liturgical prayer, which is but one of many forms of prayer—"the Spirit breatheth where He will" (John iii. 8)—is, speaking for the mass of mankind, the form of prayer which best promotes the glory of God and the sanctification of souls.

Q. *What gives liturgical prayer its supereminence over all other forms of prayer?*

A. 1. Liturgical prayer is the official prayer of the Church, which is the Bride of Christ. It is the voice of the Spouse speaking to her well Beloved. It is the voice of the Living Christ addressing the Eternal Father. It is Jesus Who prays in the Church and by the Church. He is the principle of its praise, its adoration, its petition, its satisfaction.

2. Every official prayer, every ceremony instituted by the Church has a power of impetration which is *of itself* irresistible. When we join in liturgical prayer two forces are at work—the power of our individual souls offering homage and presenting petition to God, and the power of the whole Church, the Spouse of Christ gathering up our imperfect homage and feeble petition, and uniting them with its own perfect homage and its own all-powerful appeal.

3. Liturgical prayer is the work of the Holy Ghost. The spirit of God knows the human heart, and the prayers of the Church are calculated to satisfy our loftiest aspirations and to raise us to the highest pinnacle of holiness to which we may ascend.

4. Liturgical prayer is "living dogma." It is shot through with the deepest truths of God's revelation to

man—"*legem credendi, lex statuit supplicandi*," "The rule of faith is indicated by the law of our worship." In the Church's liturgy we drink in dogma. Liturgy has been called the people's Catechism.

Q. *What does our present Holy Father Pope Pius XI say of the annual celebrations of the sacred mysteries in the liturgy of the Church?*

A. In the Encyclical *Quas Primas* (11th Dec., 1925) he says: "People are instructed in the truths of faith and brought up to appreciate the inner joys of religion far more effectually by the annual celebration of the sacred mysteries than by an official announcement of the teaching of the Church."

It has been said that, if we celebrate the liturgical feasts in the spirit of the Church, we shall be ignorant of nothing that we should know.

Q. *What are the outstanding forms of liturgical worship?*

A. 1. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. (It will be discussed in detail in the second section of this Catechism).

2. The Divine Office which centres round the Mass. When a priest says his Office, he prays in the name of the Church and in union with the Church. The whole Church, the Spouse of Christ, unites in his prayer. His prayer of praise and adoration mingles with the praise and adoration of the liturgy of Heaven.

3. The Sacraments—all of which have a direct relation to the Sacrifice of the Altar, and are channels of the grace won for us upon the Cross.

4. The celebration of the liturgical year, which constitutes, as it were, the setting of the daily Mass. (It will be discussed in the third section of this Catechism).

5. The Sacramentals, which acquire their value through the prayer of the Church and which in the

beginning were associated with the celebration of Mass (*v.* p. 135).

Q. *How may we most readily acquire the spirit of liturgy?*

A. 1. By active participation in the Mass.

2. By a knowledge of the rites and ceremonies used in the administration of the Sacraments.

3. By celebrating the mysteries of our Lord's life in the spirit of the Church.

4. By the due performance of liturgical ceremonies and due attention to liturgical symbols.

Q. *Mention some of the liturgical ceremonies which, if rightly attended to, will help us to acquire the spirit of liturgy. How do symbols help?*

A. 1. *The Sign of the Cross.*—We should make it reasonably large—moving the hand slowly from forehead to breast, from shoulder to shoulder. Our heart and will should enter into its making. So made it will penetrate the soul, for the Cross is the sign of our Redemption. So made habitually it will dedicate our body and soul to the service of Christ.

2. *Genuflection.*—We should genuflect slowly and deeply, realizing vividly each time that our genuflection is an act of adoration to the Infinite God. When we bend the knee we should bow the heart in humility in the consciousness of our own unworthiness and of God's Infinite Majesty.

3. *Using Holy Water.*—We should reflect that the Church has exorcised the water, has purified it, and as we make the sign of the Cross with holy water we should recall that holy water tends to purify us. It should remind us, too, of the baptismal water which cleansed our souls from original sin. By our reverent use of holy water Venial sin is blotted out.

4. *At the Confiteor.*—When we strike our breast at the words "through my fault," we should make the striking of our breast a true sign of the repentance of our heart. The pressure of the hand should symbolize the crushing of the heart in sorrow for sin.

5. *Holy Things*, e.g. the candle upon the altar.—Its flame mounts upwards as our soul should mount upwards to God; its wick burns brightly as our hearts should burn in love. It is made of pure wax of the bee, the symbol of virginity. It reminds us that the light of divine love will burn only in the heart that is pure.

All things then conspire to praise God—not only the soul, but the body, head, hand and knee—and things in nature as well—the wax of the candle, the wick and the flame, the linen on the altar, the flowers and the incense (*cf.* Guardini).

Carrying out those ceremonies of our daily life in the spirit of the Church, acquiring an ever-present sense of the Church's symbolism, we will grow to a deeper appreciation of the necessity of our union with the Church in all its public worship; we will attain a vivid realization of our being members of the great family of God, of the Mystical Body of Christ; we will have a living consciousness of our union with Christ, Who is the centre of the Church's liturgy; we will feel that Christ is our life, and tend towards the goal of all Christian endeavour: "And I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20).

Chapter II

CATHOLIC RITES

Q. *What is understood by the term "rite"?*

A. Rite (from *ritus*, custom) is the form, fixed by definite legislation or lawful custom, in which liturgical functions must be carried out. The form may consist of ceremonies and prayers or of ceremonies, prayers and chants.

Hence we speak of the rite of Baptism, of Pontifical rite for functions carried out by a bishop, and of the Roman Rite, the Coptic Rite, the Maronite Rite, etc., that is, the whole complex of the services of the Roman, the Coptic, the Maronite Church. In this last sense we use the term rite in this chapter.

Q. *What is the origin of the various rites of the Catholic Church?*

A. The Catholic world was divided first into three and subsequently into five Patriarchates. Each Patriarchate developed its own rite or modified its parent rite. These Patriarchates were of Rome, which represented the Western world and to which all the others were subject, of Antioch, of Alexandria, of Jerusalem and of Constantinople (Byzantium). Some of these rites used various languages, language not being a criterion of rite.

Q. *How many rites are there in the Catholic Church?*

A. There are nineteen rites, of which three are Western and sixteen are proper to the Eastern Uniats.

Q. *What is understood by the term Eastern Uniats?*

A. The Eastern Uniats are those various groups of Oriental Catholics who broke off from the Schismatical Churches of the East and returned to the allegiance of Rome. Each group was allowed to keep its own rite and to use the liturgical language to which it was accustomed.

Q. *How many Eastern Uniats now exist?*

A. The Uniats—the name being, however, given to some Oriental Christians who were never in schism—amount to about eight millions. They are Catholics in every sense of the word and are in union with Rome.

Q. *How was their union with Rome strikingly demonstrated on the occasion of the celebration of the sixteenth centenary of the Council of Nicæa* (325 A.D.)*?*

A. In November, 1925—the year of the 16th centenary—religious functions were carried out in St. John Lateran's in eleven different rites, viz.:—the Syrian (Mesopotamia and Syria), the Georgian (Constantinople), the Armenian (Turkey, Russia and Galicia), the Chaldean (Mesopotamia and Persia), the Greco-Albanese or Italo-Greek (Southern Italy), the Roumanian (Roumania), the Maronite (Lebanon Hills), the Syro-Malabar (Malabar Coast), the Coptic (Egypt), the Slavonic (Russia), the Ruthenian (Galicia, Czecho-Slovakia); and in St. Peter's in the Greco-Byzantine rite (Greece and Turkey). At the function in St. Peter's our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, presided and observed all the ceremonies prescribed by the Byzantine rite, thus exercising the Apostolic power of Supreme Head of all the rites equally venerated by the Catholic Church.

Besides these twelve there are the Ethiopic rite (Abyssinia), the Bulgarian (Turkey and Bulgaria), the Serbian (Jugo-Slavia), the Melkite (Syria and Egypt).

Of all sixteen rites the Ruthenian, Roumanian, Syro-

Malabar and Maronite have the largest number of adherents.

Q. *What are the three Western rites?*

A. 1. The Mozarabic Rite.

2. The Ambrosian Rite.

3. The Roman Rite, which prevails almost universally throughout the Church.

Q. *Where does the Mozarabic Rite survive?*

A. In Toledo and Salamanca. Up to the 11th century it was the national liturgy of Spain. Cardinal Ximenes in the 16th century had its books restored and founded a college of priests in Toledo to perpetuate its use.

Q. *What is the origin of the word "Mozarabic"?*

A. The word means a "would-be-Arab," and was first applied in ridicule to those Christians of Spain, who owed allegiance to the Moorish king, but were allowed the practice of their own religion.

Q. *Where does the Ambrosian Rite prevail?*

A. In Milan. It is called after St. Ambrose who, as Bishop of Milan, practised this rite. Pope Pius XI is the first Pope of the Ambrosian Rite.

Q. *How many liturgical languages are there in the Catholic Church?*

A. There are twelve liturgical languages—Latin, Greek, Syriac, Chaldaic, Arabic, Ethiopian, Slavonic, Ruthenian, Bulgarian, Armenian, Coptic, and Roumanian.

Q. *What was originally the liturgical language of Rome?*

A. Greek; for the first Christians at Rome were a Greek-speaking community. The familiar *Kyrie, eleison* is a survival and a vivid reminder of that early time. In the solemn Papal Mass to this day the Epistle and Gospel are sung both in Latin and in Greek.

Q. *When was Latin introduced as the language of the Roman Rite?*

A. In the 2nd or 3rd century. Except in the case of the Eastern Uniats, Latin prevails throughout the whole Catholic world as the liturgical language of the Church.

Q. *What advantages are derived from the use of Latin, a dead language, as the language of the Liturgy?*

A. It makes for unity of faith and uniformity in worship. It makes for permanence, since living languages are subject to change and decay. It makes for accuracy of expression and clearness of definition in the exposition of dogmatic and moral truth. It awakens reverence since it links up the present with the glorious past—the prayers that inspired the martyrs ring in our ears, when we assist at Holy Mass, and stir our hearts to like devotion to Christ and to like loyalty to the faith.

Section I

THE CHURCH

Chapter III

THE CHURCH

Q. *How may places of worship be classified?*

A. Into two groups, viz.—churches and oratories.

Q. *What is the meaning of the word "church"?*

A. The word "church" from the Greek *kuriakon* (*doma*) means a public building which is set apart for public Christian worship and in which all the faithful may assemble for the offering up of the Holy Sacrifice, for the reception of the Sacraments, and for participation in other liturgical functions.

Q. *In what special sense is the Church the Lord's House for Catholics?*

A. Because Christ appears in it to renew in an unbloody manner the Sacrifice He offered up on Mount Calvary, to give Himself to us as the supernatural food of our souls in Holy Communion; to set up His throne in the Tabernacle, and to be continually present as God and Man for our consolation and sanctification.

Q. *How should the faithful look upon their parish church (or whatever church serves their spiritual needs)?*

A. The Church is for the faithful the centre of all supernatural life. It generates light and life in every heart and in every home. From it grace flows upon all the flock, and through it good works and Christian

virtues flourish and bear fruit. It should be the focus of parochial life towards which all interests converge, to which all hearts should turn.

Q. *How does the liturgy bring out the transcendent importance of the Church as a sacred building?*

A. By the elaborate ceremony of laying the foundation stone; by the form of the solemn Blessing, but more especially by the ceremony of the solemn Dedication which, in many respects, is the most beautiful and significant ceremony in the Catholic liturgy.

Q. *Into what various classes are churches divided?*

A. Churches may be metropolitan, cathedral, collegiate, conventual or parochial.

Q. *What is a metropolitan church?*

A. A metropolitan church is a church presided over by an archbishop and is called simple, primatial or patriarchal, according as it is the seat of an archbishop simply, of a primate, or of a patriarch.

Q. *What is a cathedral church?*

A. A cathedral church is one which is presided over by a bishop and in which the bishop has his seat (*Cathedra*) or throne.

Q. *How should the faithful regard the cathedral church?*

A. The faithful of the diocese should regard the cathedral church as the Mother of all the churches in the diocese, should frequent it as far as is possible when the bishop pontificates, presides at the throne, or preaches, and should assist at the solemn celebration of the anniversary of its dedication.

Q. *By whom is the metropolitan or cathedral church served?*

A. Apart from practice sanctioned by custom or authority, the cathedral church is served by a chapter or body of canons whose duty it is to chant, or at least recite, the Divine Office daily in choir.

Q. *What is a collegiate church?*

A. It is a church served by a body of secular clergy who do not constitute a chapter but are bound to the daily chanting or recitation of the Divine Office in choir.

Q. *What is a conventual church?*

A. A conventual church is one served by a body of regular clergy who are bound to chant or to recite the Office daily in choir.

Q. *What is a parochial church?*

A. It is one which serves the needs of a parish and which is presided over by a parish priest or administrator. The needs of a parish may be further supplied by a church which is called a " chapel of ease " or succursal chapel.

Q. *Are some churches granted special titles of honour?*

A. Yes, some churches are raised to the honour of basilicas.

Q. *How is the name basilica derived?*

A. The word comes from the Greek *basilike* (*oikia*)—royal (house)—and was originally applied to the buildings consisting of an oblong hall with double colonnade and apse used for courts of justice and as a meeting place for assemblies.

Q. *To what Christian churches was the name originally applied?*

A. To the churches raised over the tombs of martyrs, but now it is regarded as a title of honour and may be applied to different categories of churches.

Q. *How many kinds of basilicas are there?*

A. There are two classes of basilicas—viz., major and minor. All are remarkable for their antiquity, structure, dignity or privileges.

Q. *Enumerate the major basilicas.*

A. The major basilicas, each of which contains a

papal altar, are the four great patriarchal churches corresponding to the four great Patriarchates, viz. :—

The Church of St. John Lateran, the Mother and chief of all churches, which represents the Patriarchate of the West and of the Catholic world. It bears the title of Archbasilica.

The Church of St. Peter's, representing the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

The Church of St. Paul's, outside the walls, representing the Patriarchate of Alexandria in Egypt.

The Church of St. Mary Major, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, which represents the Patriarchate of Antioch.

The church of St. Lawrence (the Deacon) was for a long time of the same dignity as these four great basilicas, but now it does not enjoy all their privileges.

Q. *What does the title "minor basilica" import?*

A. It is essentially a title of honour. The clergy of minor basilicas have certain rights of precedence over other clergy, carry in procession certain ensigns of sovereignty which mark their special relation with the Sovereign pontiff. These minor basilicas enjoy the right of having the Papal arms displayed upon their outer walls.

Q. *What is an oratory?*

A. An oratory is a place which is destined for public worship, but which does not as its primary purpose serve all the faithful.

The primary purpose of a church is to serve all the faithful; the primary purpose of an oratory is to serve a community, a family, or even a private individual.

Q. *How are oratories classified?*

A. Into public, semi-public, and private in accordance with the needs they subserve.

Q. *State the difference between these three classes.*

A. A public oratory is a place of worship intended principally for a special community, or even for a family, but which the faithful are free to attend at least at those special times devoted to religious worship.

A semi-public oratory is one which is destined for a special community, and which is not freely and habitually open to the faithful in general.

A private or domestic oratory is one erected in a private house for the use of only a family or a private individual.

Q. *What is the orientation of a church?*

A. Originally churches were built so that the apse faced due east (the Orient) and the principal entrance due west. So universally was this orientation carried out at one time that the Gospel side came to be known as the North side (where the men assembled) and the Epistle side as the South side (where the women assembled).

Q. *Was this rule absolute?*

A. There were many exceptions due to reasons of a practical order—the lie of the ground, the nature of the soil, the surroundings; while in the 5th century the apse faced due west, for at that period the priest used to celebrate Mass with his face turned towards the people (*i.e.*, towards the east). After the 5th century the present usage in saying Mass was adopted and the former orientation restored. From the 11th century to the Renaissance the strict rule was generally observed, but after the Renaissance the observance of it has been more or less abandoned.

Q. *How are the right or left sides of the church determined?*

A. By the crucifix upon the altar—the right-hand

of the figure of our Lord points to the right side of the church.

Q. *Of what various parts does a church consist?*

A. As the High Altar is the central feature of the church, the most important part of a church is the space enclosing the altar and reaching to the Communion rail, to which the name of the *Sanctuary* is given.

Within the sanctuary in front of the altar (or sometimes behind it) are arranged the stalls or benches for the clergy. The portion of the sanctuary reserved for this purpose is called the *Choir* (or *presbyterium*).

The back portion of the sanctuary generally ends in a semi-circular or polygonal recess, arched or dome-roofed, to which is given the name of the *Apse*.

From the choir or Communion rail to the principal door the *Nave* extends and parallel to and divided by pillars from the nave are the *Aisles* or lateral naves.

Sometimes another nave runs between the choir (or Communion rail) and the central nave across the church forming the arms of a Latin cross. The two arms of the cross are called *Transepts*.

Q. *What is the origin of the word "nave"?*

A. Nave comes from the Latin *navis*, meaning a ship. The churches in the 4th century had generally the form of a ship, the door representing the poop and the apse the prow. The temple of the Christians symbolised the society of the faithful. That society figured by the Ark of Noah and the Barque of Peter is likened to a ship that voyages through the waters of this world to the shores of eternity.

Q. *From what period does Christian architecture date?*

A. From the early years of the 4th century, subsequent to the Edict of Milan (313), when the Greco-Roman or Hellenistic Basilica (later on called the Latin Basilica) became the type of the Christian Church.

Q. *What was the nature of the churches built in the period previous to the Edict of Milan?*

A. Domestic chapels established in private houses, special buildings hastily erected between two periods of persecution ; sepulchral chapels primarily intended for the celebration of anniversaries, but used subsequently for the celebration of all liturgical functions.

Chapter IV

THE CHRISTIAN ALTAR

Q. *What is an altar?*

A. An altar is the table on which the Eucharistic Sacrifice is offered up and the Sacrifice of Calvary thereby renewed. St. Paul calls it "the table of the Lord" (Cor. x. 21).

Q. *What is the origin of the word "altar"?*

A. It comes from the Latin *altus*, high, the altar being always supported upon a raised structure.

Q. *What was the first Christian altar?*

A. The first Christian altar was the table in the supper-room at which our Lord instituted the Blessed Eucharist. It is claimed that parts of this table are preserved still in the Basilica of St. John Lateran.

Q. *What kind of altars were used in earliest Christian times?*

A. As Mass used to be celebrated in private houses the ordinary long and rectangular wooden tables in domestic use served as altars. In the time of the persecutions Mass was celebrated on stone slabs placed over or close to the tombs of the martyrs or on square or oblong tables of wood resting upon three legs or one central support.

Q. *Do any of these wooden altars still survive?*

A. Besides the portions of the table of the Last Supper mentioned above, it is claimed that the wooden table on which St. Peter offered up the Holy Sacrifice in the house of Senator Pudens—subsequently transformed into the Church of St. Pudenziana—is preserved, encased in marble, in the Papal altar of St. John Lateran.

Q. *May Mass be celebrated without an altar?*

A. Though Mass may be celebrated outside a church in the open air or in a private room, it may not be celebrated without an altar or an altar-stone.

Q. *Of what material must an altar be made?*

A. Since the 6th century altars must be made of stone. The Breviary states that the obligation of using stone for altars was imposed by St. Silvester I (+ 335), but wooden altars were in vogue long after his time. The Provincial Council of Epeaune in Jura was the first to issue a decree declaring stone to be essential. Every altar must be of consecrated stone.

Q. *How are altars classified in the liturgy?*

A. There are two kinds of altars—viz., portable altars (generally called altar-stones) and fixed altars.

Q. *What is a portable altar or altar-stone?*

A. A portable altar is a four-cornered stone slab, square or rectangular in shape, large enough to allow the Host and the greater part of the chalice to rest upon it, and provided with a cavity or sepulchre in which the relics of martyrs are placed at its consecration. It is placed on the top of a table of wood or of stone, or inserted in the table towards the middle and near the outer edge.

Q. *What is a fixed altar in the liturgical sense?*

A. A fixed altar is one consisting of a table (*mensa*), a support or base (*stipes*), and a cavity or sepulchre for relics, which may be cut out of the table or out of the support. The table and support must be so joined together as to form one whole, and by virtue of the consecration the table and support, together with the receptacle of the relics and the thin slab of stone covering it, form one solidly connected and consecrated whole.

Q. *What quality of stone must be used for an altar-stone or for a fixed altar?*

A. The stone must be of one piece, natural, entire, and not liable to crumble away—e.g. marble or hard slate.

Q. *Is there a singular appropriateness in the use of stone for altars?*

A. The consecrated altar symbolises Christ, and Christ is described in the Holy Scriptures as the "rock" and the "corner-stone."

Q. *How did the insertion of the relics of martyrs in the altar-stone arise?*

A. The basilicas were built at first over the tombs of martyrs. The body of a martyr or remarkable relics of a martyr were, later on, buried in a chamber hollowed out from the front part of the solid structure which often served as a support of the table of the altar. This association of a martyr with the altar gave rise to the insertion of relics of a martyr in the altar-stone as a universal practice since the 6th century.

Q. *What purpose does the insertion of the relics serve?*

A. It associates with the Sacrifice of the Mass, "from which martyrdom received its whole beginning" (Secret of Thursday after Third Sunday in Lent), those who by their death have united themselves with the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross.

Q. *May there be many altars in a church?*

A. Originally there was only one altar, as there was only one Mass offered up in the church, to emphasise the unity of the Church. Additional altars were erected to honour special saints as well as to provide for the daily celebration of private Mass by the priests. In a consecrated church the principal altar should be consecrated; in a church that is simply blessed, the high altar may be either fixed or portable. The secondary altars may be either fixed or portable.

Q. *What position should an altar occupy?*

A. Originally the altar stood between the clergy in

the presbyterium or choir and the people who stood in the nave. The high altar at least should be free all round, as in the ceremony of consecration an altar is incensed on all sides seven times. Frequently the high altar is attached to the wall of the apse. Side altars are usually attached to a wall of the church.

Q. *What is meant by the titular of an altar?*

A. The saint or mystery to which the altar is dedicated—saint being used in a wide sense to include the Blessed Virgin Mary, etc.

Q. *Must the altar be raised above the ground?*

A. Every altar must have at least one step, while, as a rule, the high altar must have three steps. The highest step is called the predella or platform or footpace.

For solemn High Mass these three steps are required to differentiate the hierarchal rank of sacred ministers: the celebrant stands on the predella, the deacon on the middle step, the sub-deacon on the level ground (or *in plano* as is said).

Q. *What is the tendency of the modern liturgical movement with regard to the altar?*

A. To concentrate attention upon the actual altar, to remove the superstructure back from the altar or to dispense with it altogether, so that the altar may stand out, with its dominating figure of the Cross, as the place of Sacrifice and the table of the Lord's Supper, and that, with its tabernacle, it may stand out as the throne upon which Christ reigns as King and from which He dispenses the bounteous largesse of Divine grace.

The Ornaments of the Altar

Q. *With what ornaments is the liturgical altar provided?*

A. Speaking generally, the liturgical altar is provided

with a ciborium or baldakin, an antipendium, a tabernacle with its veil, three altar-cloths, candlesticks and crucifix.

Q. *Is all this in accordance with primitive practice?*

A. Originally nothing was allowed on the altar save the actual necessaries for the Sacrifice—viz., the altar cloth, the bread and wine and the Sacramentary—*i.e.*, the Mass-book and Ritual of the celebrant. In the 9th century Pope Leo IV would permit in addition nothing but the relics of saints, the four Gospels and the pyx containing sacred particles for the communion of the sick.

Q. *When were the antipendium, candlesticks and crucifix introduced as ornaments of the altar?*

A. The antipendium dates from about the 6th century; up to the 10th century candlesticks were arranged at the sides (as the acolytes' candles at vespers now) or round the altar; in the 5th century the altar-cross was in use, but it was merely the processional cross which was left resting against the altar. It was not until the 13th century that a cross became a distinct feature of the altar and its position between the candlesticks was determined.

Q. *What is the ciborium?* *

A. The ciborium from the Greek *Kiborion*, a cup, is a dais of wood, stone or marble resting on pillars, covering the entire altar and serving the double purpose of adding dignity and majesty to the altar and of protecting it from dust. It owes its name to the shape of the dais, which looks like an inverted cup or bowl.

Between the pillars curtains were regularly suspended that were capable of completely hiding the altar. It

* In popular language the "ciborium" is referred to as a "canopy" or "baldacchino" or "baldakin" (*v.* p. 38).

was at one time the practice to draw the curtains during the early portion of the Mass before the departure of the catechumens. From the interior of the dais was suspended over the altar a pyx, shaped like a tower or like a dove, containing the Blessed Sacrament for the communion of the sick and the dying. The ciborium lent itself to elaborate ornamentation and decoration.

Q. *Is there any substitute for the ciborium?*

A. When no ciborium exists it is proper that there should be a baldakin (or baldacchino), which is a dais, usually made of precious stuff fastened round a crown of wood or plaster or metal, rectangular or oval in shape, and projecting or suspended over the altar and the predella.

Q. *What is the origin of the word baldakin or baldacchino?*

A. The word comes from the precious stuff known as baldaccini, which got its name from its place of origin, Baldacco (another form of the name Bagdad).

Q. *Is the use of the baldakin prescribed?*

A. It is prescribed by the *Ceremoniale Episc.* (Lib. I. cap. xiv), by the S. C. R., June, 1766, and by the instructions of Pius X to the Roman churches; but the law is too rarely observed.

Q. *What advantages does the baldakin possess?*

A. It obviates the necessity of the throne for the Blessed Sacrament in ordinary cases of Exposition.

Q. *What is the antipendium?*

A. The antipendium is a movable and preferably hanging altar-frontal which is made of some rich fabric, and which extends along the whole front of the altar from the table to the predella. It may be ornamented with vertical stripes and have in the centre a cross or other sacred emblem. Its colour varies with the colour of the Office of the day. If the front of the altar be

already highly ornamented the antipendium may be dispensed with.

Q. *What is the tabernacle?*

A. The tabernacle from the Latin *tabernaculum*, a tent, is a box or chest permanently fixed in the middle of the altar and destined to contain the sacred vessels in which the Blessed Sacrament is preserved.

Q. *Of what material is it made?*

A. It may be made of wood or of stone, or of metal, precious or otherwise. It may have a rounded or gabled top surmounted with a cross. The interior should be gilded or lined with white silk. A corporal should be spread on the bottom of the tabernacle for the sacred vessels to rest on.

In front of the tabernacle behind the door it would be well that a curtain of white silk be suspended, so that when the tabernacle door would be opened, the sacred vessels would remain hidden from view. To facilitate the removal of the ciborium this interior curtain ought to be divided into two parts.

The exterior of the tabernacle, more particularly the door, should be ornamented.

Q. *Should the exterior of the tabernacle be exposed to view?*

A. The tabernacle, no matter how precious and ornamented it may be, should be covered by a conopeum, or tabernacle veil, as long as it contains the Sacred Species.

Q. *What is the tabernacle veil or conopeum?*

A. It is a tent-shaped covering enveloping the top and sides of the tabernacle, ornamented with braid and fringes, and divided in front so as to permit of the opening of the tabernacle door.

A curtain drawn across the tabernacle door cannot be regarded as a conopeum.

The tabernacle should be so constructed as to permit of its being easily covered with a veil. A dome-shaped top (fixed or movable) is best suited for the carrying out of this strict liturgical regulation.

Q. *What is the material of the tabernacle veil?*

A. Silk is advisable but not obligatory. Wool, linen, and even cotton are allowed.

Q. *What colour must the veil be?*

A. White, or the colour of the office of the day. Black is never permitted, violet being used in its stead.

Q. *What is the significance of the tabernacle veil?*

A. The veil is a mark of sovereignty, and indicates that the King of kings dwells within the tabernacle. It is the only sure sign of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

Q. *What additional honour is paid to the tabernacle?*

A. A light, called the sanctuary lamp, must burn day and night before the tabernacle, that the faithful may be reminded that the Light of the World dwells therein. This regulation of having a light burn before the Blessed Sacrament dates from the 13th century. It came into general use in the 16th century. One light is absolutely necessary. It would be in accordance with the instructions of the *Ceremoniale* (xii. 17) to have many lights (odd in number) burning before the altar of the Blessed Sacrament.

Q. *When was the tabernacle adopted as the place in which the Blessed Sacrament should be preserved?*

A. About the 16th century.

Q. *How was the Blessed Sacrament preserved prior to that time?*

A. Originally, when, for instance, Mass used to be said only once a week, the Sacred Species was preserved in the private houses of the faithful. After the per-

secutions It was preserved in a cabinet in the sacristy or in a cupboard inserted in the wall on the Gospel side of the choir. Later on It was preserved in a pyx inserted in a tower- or a dove-shaped receptacle, and suspended over the altar, or the pyx was kept in a special Sacrament house near the high altar. Subsequently It was placed in a pyx resting upon the altar. The next step was the erection of the tabernacle.

Q. *Should every altar have a tabernacle?*

A. A tabernacle should be erected only upon the altar—generally the high altar in a parish church—in which the Blessed Sacrament is preserved, but, as the Blessed Sacrament may have to be transferred for a while on certain occasions, it is necessary that another altar—and not more than one—should be provided with a tabernacle. It would be quite correct and convenient to have a movable tabernacle available for this second altar.

Q. *What kind of cross is required upon the altar?*

A. A cross bearing the image of the Crucified must be placed in the middle of the altar between and in line with the candlesticks, and placed in such a position that it may easily be seen by the priest and the faithful who assist at Mass. It may be placed on top of the tabernacle, but that is not its normal position.

Q. *Should the Cross be a striking feature of the altar?*

A. The Cross should be an outstanding feature of the altar, serving to remind the celebrant and the faithful of the Sacrifice of Calvary, of which the Mass is the unbloody renewal and the perfect representation.

Q. *How many candlesticks should be on the altar?*

A. Two, four or six; but the usual practice is to have six on the high altar and two on the side altars. Where there are two gradines on the high altar it is customary

to have four candlesticks on the lower gradine and six candlesticks with the Cross on the higher gradine.

Q. *On what should the Cross and candlesticks rest?*

A. They should rest on each side of the tabernacle upon the altar table or upon a ledge called a gradine placed at the back of the altar table.

Q. *Is more than one gradine admitted?*

A. Several gradines may be admitted. It would be better that the additional gradines be of a temporary nature for the more elaborate decoration of the altar upon great festive occasions.

Q. *To what has the introduction of gradines led?*

A. To the elaborate structures called retables, which came into fashion after the decline of ciborium altars in the 11th century, when altars came to be attached to the end wall of the church. These retables contained niches for images and reliquaries of the saints and for the elaborate decoration of the altar. Painters and sculptors displayed on them their highest skill, and before long the significance of the altar was lost in the ever-increasing splendour and size of the superstructure.

Q. *What other ornaments are found upon the altar?*

A. The stand or cushion for the Missal, three altar-charts—all four of which should be removed when Mass is over for the day—the relics or images of the saints placed between the candlesticks, and natural or artificial flowers set upon the gradines and not upon the table of the altar. Flowers, so desirable and appropriate in themselves for the decoration of the altar, should not too much abound.

Q. *What is the altar-cover?*

A. It is a cloth usually of rich material spread over the table of the altar to protect the linen altar cloths from the dust. It is sometimes called the Vesper cloth,

because it may be left on the altar during Vespers. It must be removed, however, at the *Magnificat.*

Q. *What is meant by a Papal altar?*

A. It is an altar at which Mass may be celebrated by the Pope alone or by another only by special Papal indult. The Major Basilicas have each a Papal altar.

Q. *What is a privileged altar?*

A. A privileged altar is one at which by force of a special Papal privilege or canonical regulation a priest may gain a plenary indulgence for the deceased person for whom he offers up Holy Mass.

Sometimes the privilege is personal. A priest who is in enjoyment of that privilege may gain a like plenary indulgence for the dead though he does not celebrate at a privileged altar.

Q. *Enumerate some other of the more important features of the Church?*

A. The credence or credence table, the communion rail, the confessionals, the pulpit, the baptistery, the mortuary chapel, the organ, the bell, the sacristy.

Q. *What is the credence?*

A. The credence is a table, shelf or bracket usually against the Epistle wall of the choir or chapel, used to hold the cruets, basin and finger-towel required for Holy Mass. At High Mass the chalice, paten, host, etc., covered by the humeral veil, rest on the credence until the Offertory. After the ablutions the chalice, etc., is brought back to the credence by the sub-deacon.

Q. *State the origin of the Communion rail or bench.*

A. This rail or bench served the purpose of separating the choir or chancel reserved for the clergy from the nave where the people foregathered. It is called the Communion rail because the faithful came up to it to receive Holy Communion.

Q. *When were the present style of confessionals introduced?*

A. Not until after the Council of Trent in the 16th century. Previous to that the confessionals consisted of a kind of small movable arm-chairs often placed behind the retable at the back of the altar. The important change effected is that there must be a grating between the confessor and the penitent.

Q. *When were pulpits first introduced?*

A. In the late Middle Ages. They came to be quite general in the 15th century. In earliest times the bishop would preach from his throne at the back of the apse, attended by his clergy, arranged in a semi-circle on either side of him (At the present day it is not unusual for a bishop sitting on his faldstool at the entrance of the choir to preach to his people. The bishop sits because he is the teacher *par excellence* of his flock). Later on the preacher would occupy the *ambo*—one of the raised platforms led up to by steps adjoining the choir and from which the Epistle and the Gospel used to be sung. Subsequently a special structure was erected in the nave of the church from which sermons would be preached.

Q. *What is the baptistery?*

A. The baptistery is a place set apart in the church to contain the baptismal font. It is there baptism is administered.

The baptistery should be a separate chapel, or at least it should be railed off from the rest of the church, and provided with a gate fastened by a lock. It is prescribed that, where it is possible, a picture of Our Lord being baptised by St. John be hung up in the baptistery.

Q. *What is the mortuary chapel?*

A. It is a chapel set apart for the funeral service

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in which the bodies of the dead lie overnight and from which they are borne to the grave.

Q. *When was the organ introduced into the Church service?*

A. About the 9th century. In the beginning the organ was very rudimentary and its use far from being widespread, but by the 13th or 14th century many improvements were introduced, and in the 16th century it had attained something of its modern perfection and was in general use.

Q. *When were church-bells first used?*

A. About the 6th century; but their use did not become general till the 9th century. From the 11th century it became the custom to give bells a name, and the blessing of a bell is spoken of as its baptism.

Q. *Of what does the blessing of a bell consist?*

A. Of the recitation of psalms, of washing with holy water, of anointing with oil of the sick and with chrism, of incensation, and of the reading of that portion of the tenth chapter of St. Luke which records the visit of Jesus to Mary Magdalen and Martha: the purpose of the bell being to remind the people to seek "the one thing necessary."

Q. *What names are usually inscribed on the bell?*

A. The name of the saint after whom it is called, the name of the donor, of the godfather and godmother, together with inscriptions that are often quaint and ingenious. One well-known Latin inscription on a church-bell in Metz sums up all the purposes a bell serves, and may be translated thus:—

I praise the true God; I mourn the dead;

I summon the people; I ward off lightning;

I convoke the clergy; I glorify festivals.

Q. *What is the sacristy?*

A. The sacristy (from the Latin *sacer*, sacred) is a room or annexe adjoining the presbyterium or choir where the clergy and acolytes get ready for the celebration of sacred functions and where all the necessaries for Divine service are preserved—the liturgical linen, the liturgical vessels and instruments, the liturgical vestments, the liturgical books, etc.

Chapter V

SACRED VESSELS AND UTENSILS

Q. *What is meant by sacred or liturgical vessels?*

A. By sacred vessels are meant all vessels, utensils, or instruments which are used for Divine worship.

Q. *How may the sacred or liturgical vessels be classified?*

A. They may be classified into three groups, viz. :—

1. Those which are consecrated.
2. Those which are blessed.
3. Those which are neither consecrated nor blessed.

Q. *What sacred vessels are consecrated?*

A. The sacred vessels which are consecrated are the chalice and paten.

Q. *Why is so great importance attached to these two?*

A. Because they are the principal vessels used in offering up the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Q. *What is the form of the chalice?*

A. The form of the chalice varies, but it consists essentially of a cup, a stem provided usually with a knob, and a foot or base.

Q. *Of what material may the chalice be made?*

A. The chalice may be made of gold or silver, or, in poor churches, of tin, but in the two latter cases the interior of the cup must be gilt.

Q. *When does the chalice lose its consecration?*

A. When it has been profaned or is so broken or damaged that it cannot serve its purpose.

Q. *What happens if the gilt is worn away?*

A. The cup must be re-gilt, but the chalice does not lose its consecration thereby.

Q. *What is the paten?*

A. The paten (from a Greek word "*patáne*," meaning a flat plate) is a thin circular plate of metal used for holding the Host at the Holy Sacrifice.

Q. *What size is the paten?*

A. It need be only slightly larger in diameter than the cup of the chalice, on which it rests during the early and later portions of the Mass.

Q. *Of what material is the paten made?*

A. The same rule holds for the paten as for the chalice, the concave surface being gilt when the paten is not made of gold.

Q. *How and by whom are the chalice and paten consecrated?*

A. The chalice and paten are consecrated with the oil of chrism by the bishop.

Q. *Does the consecration give them a special character?*

A. By the consecration they are withdrawn from profane use and are specially dedicated to the service of the Almighty.

Q. *What follows from the special dedication?*

A. It follows that they can be touched or handled only by clerics or those who are authorised to do so, and it would be a sin for the laity to touch them without necessity.

Q. *What do the chalice and paten symbolise?*

A. According to the Pontifical they symbolise the tomb of our Lord in the dark reaches of which He rested after the toilsome labours of the Redemption.

Q. *What sacred vessels are blessed?*

A. The ciborium must be blessed and the lunette and monstrance may be blessed.

Q. *What is the ciborium?* *

A. The ciborium is a sacred vessel which is used to contain the consecrated hosts for the communion of the faithful.

Q. *What is the form of the ciborium?*

A. In the Middle Ages the ciborium was a round or rectangular box, hence its official name—pyx, but now it resembles a chalice and is provided with a conical cover surmounted by a cross or other sacred device.

Q. *Of what material must the ciborium be made?*

A. The Ritual prescribes that the ciborium be made of worthy and durable material, glass being forbidden ; but in practice the same rule applies to it as to the chalice.

Q. *What rule is imposed regarding the covering of the ciborium?*

A. The ciborium must be covered with a white veil of silk or other material.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the veil?*

A. The veil resembles a tent which is the sign of sovereignty, and therefore indicates the presence of our Lord and King Jesus Christ.

Q. *Who is empowered to bless a ciborium?*

A. The bishop or a parish priest within his own parish, or any priest whom the bishop may nominate.

Q. *What is the lunette?*

A. The lunette is a sacred vessel consisting of a double crescent or a double circle of metal which holds the Sacred Host in position in the monstrance.

Q. *Of what material is the lunette made?*

A. It is made of the same material as the ciborium ; if not of gold the inner surfaces of the two crescents or circles must be gilt.

* The term "ciborium" is also applied to the elaborate superstructure set on pillars which is erected over the High Altar in many churches (*v.* p. 26).

Q. *What is the monstrance?*

A. The monstrance, from the Latin "*monstrare*," to show, is a sacred vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament is exposed to the adoration of the faithful or carried in procession.

Q. *What is the form of the monstrance?*

A. The oldest kind of monstrance had the form of a tower provided with a receptacle of glass or crystal for the Sacred Host; but, later on, the transparent portion of the vessel was surrounded like the sun with rays, and for several hundred years the so-called sun-monstrance, surmounted as it must be with a cross, has been in general use.

Q. *Must the monstrance be covered?*

A. The monstrance, when it does not contain the Blessed Sacrament, must be covered with a veil whenever it is being openly brought to or from the altar or is left resting on it.

Q. *How may the lunette and monstrance be blessed?*

A. There is no strict obligation, but they are usually blessed with the same form as that with which the ciborium is blessed.

Q. *Name some of the sacred vessels or utensils which are neither blessed nor consecrated.*

A. The cruets, the thurible, the boat, the aspersorium, the aspergillum, the bell, the instrument of peace, the canopy or dais, the ombrellino, the processional cross.

Q. *What are the cruets?*

A. The cruets are small vessels of glass, crystal, or metal to contain the wine and water used in the Holy Sacrifice.

Q. *What is the thurible?*

A. The thurible or censer is a vessel suspended by

chains and used to burn incense at High Mass, Vespers, Benediction, processions and other liturgical functions.

Q. *What is the boat?*

A. The boat, so called from its shape, is a vessel used for holding incense.

Q. *What is the aspersorium?*

A. The aspersorium is a vessel used to contain holy water.

Q. *What is the aspergillum?*

A. The aspergillum was originally a bunch of hyssop for sprinkling holy water, but now it is more usually a metal or wooden rod ending in a knob.

Q. *What is the purpose of the bell?*

A. The bell is rung at the Sanctus and Elevation of the Mass and generally at the *Domine non sum dignus*, to awaken the attention and excite the devotion of the people at those solemn portions of the Mass.

Q. *What is the instrument of peace?*

A. The instrument of peace is a round or oval disc of silver or other metal, engraved in front with a cross or other sacred device, and provided with a handle at the back. It is called the *osculatorium* or *pacificale*.

Q. *When is it used?*

A. It is used, for instance, when the kiss of peace or pax is being given to the bishop assisting at a Low Mass, or to sovereigns, chief magistrates, and such like members of the faithful at a High Mass.

Q. *What is the portable canopy?*

A. The portable canopy (or baldacchino) is a rectangular frame-work of rich cloth supported by four, six, or eight staves, which is carried over the Blessed Sacrament or relics of the Sacred Passion in processions.

Q. *What is the ombrellino?*

A. The ombrellino is a small umbrella-shaped canopy capable of being carried by one person, and is held over

the Blessed Sacrament when being carried in procession within the church or when Holy Communion is being brought to the sick.

Q. *What is the processional cross?*

A. The processional cross is a cross with a long shaft usually of metal plated with gold, silver or brass.

Q. *What signal honour is paid to the processional cross?*

A. The processional cross must be accompanied by lights on each side whenever the cross-bearer is in surplice or sub-deacon's vestments, except on Holy Saturday at the *Lumen Christi*.

Chapter VI

THE LITURGICAL LINEN

Q. *How may the liturgical linen be classified?*

A. The liturgical linen may be divided into two groups, viz. :—

1. That which is blessed.
2. That for which no blessing is prescribed.

Q. *Enumerate those articles of the liturgical linen which must be blessed.*

A. The articles of liturgical linen which must be blessed are : the corporal, the pall, and the altar cloths.

Q. *What is the corporal?*

A. It is a square or rectangular piece of fine linen or hemp large enough to contain the chalice, the Host, and the ciborium at the celebration of Mass.

Q. *May the corporal be ornamented?*

A. The edges may be ornamented with fine lace and a cross may be worked into it near the front edge, but no ornament is allowed in the centre lest the collecting of the sacred fragments might be impeded.

Q. *What was the original purpose of the corporal?*

A. The corporal was originally made to cover the whole table of the altar, together with the chalice over which it was drawn.

Q. *Why is the corporal so called?*

A. The corporal is so called because on it rests the Body (Latin *corpus*) of Christ.

Q. *What is the pall?*

A. The pall is a piece of stiff linen or hemp to cover the chalice during Mass, and was substituted in the

12th century for the covering afforded by the folded corporal.

Q. *Must the pall be made of one piece only?*

A. The pall may consist of two pieces of linen or hemp, between which cardboard is inserted for the sake of stiffening it.

Q. *May the pall be ornamented?*

A. The upper side of the pall may be ornamented but the lower side must be plain.

Q. *Of what size must the pall be?*

A. The pall must be large enough to cover the paten completely.

Q. *What do the corporal and pall symbolise?*

A. The corporal and pall symbolise the swaddling clothes, in which Our Divine Lord was wrapped in the crib, and the shroud and head-cloth with which He was covered in the tomb.

Q. *What are the altar cloths?*

A. The altar cloths are three pieces of linen or hemp used to cover the altar, of which the two lower ones must cover the whole table of the altar in length and width, and the top one extend regularly to the predella on both sides.

Q. *When was the custom of using altar cloths introduced?*

A. The custom of using three altar cloths was introduced in the 9th century, but the use of one cloth to cover the altar dates back to the earliest times of the Church.

Q. *Why are so many cloths prescribed?*

A. Out of reverence for the Sacred Mysteries and out of respect for the Precious Blood which, if it was accidentally spilled, would most probably be absorbed by the cloths, and thus prevented from reaching the surface of the altar.

Q. *May Mass be celebrated without an altar cloth?*

A. It would be a grievous sin to celebrate Mass without an altar cloth except in case of grave necessity.

Q. *What do the altar cloths symbolise?*

A. As the altar symbolises Christ, so the altar cloths, according to the Pontifical, symbolise the members of Christ's Mystical Body, and as the flax out of which the linen is made springs from the earth and attains its splendid whiteness after long operations, so must the members of Christ's Mystical Body endure the manifold sufferings and trials of this life before they can attain to heavenly glory.

Q. *Who has the power to bless the liturgical linen?*

A. The bishop, the parish priest within his own parish, or any priest whom the bishop may appoint.

Q. *Enumerate the articles of liturgical linen or cloth which need not be blessed.*

A. The purificator, the finger-towel, the communion cloth, the veil of the chalice, the burse, the humeral veil, the chrismale or chrism-cloth.

Q. *What is the purificator?*

A. The purificator is a piece of pure white linen, from twelve to eighteen inches long and nine or ten inches wide. It is used for cleansing the chalice and wiping the lips and fingers of the priest after the Communion of the Mass.

Q. *How is it folded?*

A. The purificator is folded in three layers, so that when placed on the chalice beneath the paten its width is about three inches.

Q. *May a lay person touch the purificator?*

A. Once the purificator has been used in the Holy Sacrifice it may be touched only by clerics or authorized persons.

Q. *Does the same rule hold for the corporal and pall?*

A. The corporal and pall, once they have been used in the Holy Sacrifice, should not be touched by a lay person—that right being reserved to clerics and other authorized persons.

Q. *What procedure is observed before the corporal, pall and purificator may be sent to the laundry?*

A. A first washing must be given them by a cleric in Major Orders and, as the Pontifical states, this is one of the duties proper to a sub-deacon; moreover, the water used in this first washing must be thrown into the sacrarium, or, failing that, into the fire.

Q. *What is the finger towel?*

A. The finger-towel is the small towel, generally of linen or hemp, with which the priest wipes his fingers at the *Lavabo* of the Mass.

Q. *What is the communion cloth?*

A. The communion cloth is the cloth—attached usually to the communion rail—which the faithful place under the chin while receiving Holy Communion.

Q. *What is the chalice veil?*

A. The chalice veil, which came into general use in the 16th century, is a piece of silk fabric, of the same colour and quality as the vestments, used to cover the chalice on the way to and from the altar and during the earlier and later portions of the Mass.

Q. *What is the burse?*

A. The burse (duplicate of "purse," and dating from the 16th century) is a receptacle or purse in which the folded corporal is carried to and from the altar.

Q. *How is the burse made?*

A. The burse is ordinarily made of two square pieces of cardboard, one placed on the other, bound together at three edges, leaving the fourth open to permit readily of the insertion and withdrawal of the corporal: one outer side being covered with silk of the same material

and colour as the vestments, the rest being covered with linen or silk.

Q. *What is the humeral veil?*

A. The humeral veil is a rectangular piece of cloth (generally silk) covering the neck and shoulders, with its two ends hanging down in front and kept in position by being fastened across the breast with clasps or ribbons attached to the border. The edges are often ornamented and a cross or other device is attached to the centre.

Q. *By whom is the humeral veil worn ordinarily?*

A. The humeral veil, which was formerly worn by acolytes, is now worn by the sub-deacon when he carries the sacred vessels from the credence to the altar and while he holds the paten at the foot of the altar during High Mass, and by a priest when he gives Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament or carries It in procession.

Q. *What is the colour of the humeral veil?*

A. At High Mass the humeral veil is of the same colour as the vestments, and at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament the humeral veil must be always white, no matter what may be the colour of the cope which is worn by the celebrant.

Q. *What is the chrismale or chrism cloth?*

A. The chrismale is a rectangular piece of waxed linen, which covers the table of the altar, and which is used to prevent the oozing of the oil spread over the altar at the Consecration from soiling the altar-cloths.

Chapter VII

LITURGICAL VESTMENTS*

Their Origin

Q. *What is the origin of the liturgical vestments?*

A. The liturgical vestments, for the most part, have their origin in the ordinary civil dress worn in the Roman Empire in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Q. *How long did this identity between the ecclesiastical and the civil dress last?*

A. Identity between the two may be traced to the 8th century.

Q. *What movement gave rise to the distinction between the two costumes?*

A. The gradual adoption in civil life of the close-fitting garments of the Goths, begun in Rome in the 6th and 7th centuries, and the conservatism of the Church in rejecting that innovation.

Q. *To what period may we date the development of the present-day vestments?*

A. The present-day vestments, for the most part, are, in essential properties and constituents, the same as those that developed between the 4th and the 9th centuries.

Q. *What is the great characteristic of that period?*

A. The vestments began to be worn over the ordinary dress, and consequently came to be kept in the sacristy and to be put on immediately before the sacred functions.

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* *Cf.* Works by Joseph Braun, S.J., P. Batiffol, H. Thurston, S.J.; Article by Tardini in the *Alma Mater*, and Articles in the *Catholic Encyclopedia.*

Q. *Was there at all times a special reverence shown to the vestments in which Holy Mass was offered up?*

A. From early times, though the dress was identical, clerics were forbidden to wear the dress used at Mass in their ordinary social intercourse.

Q. *What was the consequence of this precaution?*

A. A sacred character was conferred on the vestments used at Mass that led to their retention when the civil fashions altered.

Liturgical Colours

Q. *What was the colour of the first vestments worn at Mass?*

A. The colour of the first vestments worn at Mass was white, the colour of the civil dress of the period.

Q. *What led to a variety of colours being introduced?*

A. The variety of colours that now exists is due to the love of symbolism that characterised the Middle Ages, and was introduced between the 9th and the 12th centuries.

Q. *What are the liturgical colours?*

A. The liturgical colours are white, red, green, violet and black.

Q. *Are any other colours allowed?*

A. Cloth of gold is allowed as a substitute for white, red and green ; cloth of silver as a substitute for white ; blue is permitted in Spain in Masses of the Immaculate Conception, and rose colour in cathedral churches on the Third Sunday of Advent and Fourth Sunday of Lent.

Q. *What does white symbolise?*

A. White is the symbol of joy, purity and innocence, absolute or restored, and is used on Feasts of Our Divine Lord, Our Blessed Lady, of the Angels, of Confessors, Holy Women who are not martyrs, and on Sundays after Easter.

Q. *What does red symbolise?*

A. Red, the natural colour of blood and of fire, is the symbol of love ; suggests the effusion of blood shed by the ardour of charity, and is used at Pentecost, on Feasts of the Holy Cross and of Martyrs.

Q. *What does green symbolise?*

A. Green symbolises hope, and is used on the Sundays after Epiphany and Pentecost : this last portion of the liturgical year represents the time of our pilgrimage to Heaven during which we hope for reward.

Q. *What does violet symbolise?*

A. Violet symbolises penance, and is used in Masses of the Season during Advent and from Septuagesima to Easter, in Quarter Tense, for Vigils outside Eastertide and at Rogations.

Q. *What does black symbolise?*

A. Black symbolises mourning, and is used at Masses for the Dead and on Good Friday.

A.—The Liturgical Vestments of (1) Priests and (2) Inferior Ministers

1.—*Of Priests*

Q. *Enumerate the liturgical vestments of priests.*

A. The liturgical vestments of priests worn at the celebration of Mass are the amice, the alb, the cincture, the maniple, the stole, and the chasuble.

Q. *What is the amice?*

A. The amice (from the Lat. *amictus*, wrapped round) is a vestment covering the neck and shoulders and worn under the alb.

Q. *Describe the formation of the amice.*

A. The amice is a piece of linen, rectangular in shape, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by 2 feet wide, provided with long strings and ornamented with a cross in the centre.

Q. *How is the amice put on?*

A. The amice is first brought to touch the head, then put round the neck, crossed on the breast, and fixed in position by the strings.

Q. *What is the origin of the amice?*

A. The origin of the amice may be traced to the scarf worn by all classes of people to cover the neck and protect the throat, or preferably to a garment called the *anagolaium*, which was a woollen shoulder strap worn by the monks over their habit when at work to secure freedom of movement for their hands.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the amice?*

A. From its original use as a covering for the head (as, for instance, with the Dominicans of to-day) it symbolises the helmet of salvation; and from its use as a protection for the throat it symbolises, as the Pontifical declares, the "discipline of the voice" (*castigatio vocis*), *i.e.*, mortification of the tongue. It symbolises in relation to the Passion the cloth with which the jailers covered the face of Our Divine Lord in the court of the High Priest.

Q. *What is the alb?*

A. The alb (from the Latin *alba* sc. *tunica*, a white tunic) is a white linen garment having long sleeves and reaching to the feet. Compare the name for Low Sunday *Dominica in Albis* (*depositis*).

Q. *What is the origin of the alb?*

A. The alb originally was simply the long inner tunic (or shirt) worn by men in the 3rd century of the Christian era which by the 6th century became the distinctive habit of clerics, and in the 10th century was reserved for use at sacred functions.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the alb?*

A. The alb symbolises, in relation to the Passion, the white garment with which Herod in derision ordered

Our Divine Lord to be clothed, and by its whiteness it symbolises the purity of soul acquired in sanctifying grace by the Blood of the Lamb.

Q. *What is the cincture?*

A. The cincture is a girdle (usually with tassels) used for holding up the alb.

Q. *Of what material and colour may the cincture be made?*

A. The cincture is made of linen or hemp, or even silk, and may be white in colour, or violet, as often, in the case of a bishop, or may vary with the colour of the vestments.

Q. *What is the origin of the cincture?*

A. The cincture was the girdle worn by the lower classes and adopted by the monks to secure freedom of movement for their feet, just as they adopted the *anagolaium* to secure freedom of movement for their hands.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the cincture?*

A. The cincture, in relation to the Passion, symbolises the bonds with which Our Divine Lord was held captive in the Garden of Olives, and as it encircles the loins which are regarded as the seat of concupiscence, it symbolises chastity.

Q. *What is the maniple?*

A. The maniple is an ornamental vestment in the form of a band which is placed on the left arm in such a position that it falls in equal length on both sides.

Q. *Of what material and colour is the maniple made, and how is it ornamented?*

A. The maniple is made of the same material and colour as the chasuble and stole, and is ornamented with three crosses at the centre and at the ends.

Q. *What is the origin of the maniple?*

A. The maniple, another accessory of Roman costume,

was originally a handkerchief held in the left hand (hence its name *manipulus*, a handful) and used to wipe away perspiration. By the 6th century it had developed into a merely ornamental piece of silk, and having become a distinctive liturgical vestment was, by the 12th century, affixed to the left forearm.

Q. *Of what minister is the maniple the distinctive vestment?*

A. It was originally proper to the deacon, but since the 9th century it is regarded as the proper to the sub-deacon.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the maniple?*

A. The maniple, in relation to the Passion, symbolises the fetters which bound Our Divine Lord when He was led forth as a criminal ; from its original use to wipe off perspiration it symbolises the trials of this earthly life, and from similarity of its name with the Latin word meaning a *sheaf*, it has come to symbolise the merits of good works.

Q. *What is the stole?*

A. The stole is a long, narrow strip of silk generally fringed at the ends which, like the maniple, is adorned with three crosses : one in the middle and one at each end.

Q. *How is the stole worn?*

A. The stole is worn round the neck over the alb, by bishops, with both ends hanging down in front, by priests, crossed over the breast, and by deacons, over the left shoulder and gathered under the right arm.

Q. *Does a priest always wear the stole crossed over his breast?*

A. The priest when he wears the stole over the surplice or over the soutane has the ends hanging down in front.

Q. *What is the material and colour of the stole?*

A. The colour of the stole is the same as that of the chasuble, and outside Mass varies with the nature of

the sacred function or the colour of the office of the day.

Q. *What is the origin of the stole?*

A. The origin of the stole is somewhat similar to the origin of the maniple. The stole, or as it is called in the Pontifical, *orarium* (from *os*, *oris*, the mouth), was originally a linen cloth used to wipe the face and protect the head from the sun, and was worn over the shoulder. In course of time it became highly ornamented. Though for centuries it was common to all orders of clergy in Rome, the movement begun in Spain in the 7th century to consider it as a special mark of distinction extended to Rome in the 9th century.

Q. *For whom is this mark of distinction reserved?*

A. The privilege of wearing the stole is reserved for bishops, priests and deacons, the Pope having the exclusive right to wear it everywhere as a sign of his universal jurisdiction, while bishops, priests, and deacons can wear it only in the exercise of sacred functions.

Q. *What does the stole symbolise?*

A. The stole in relation to the Passion symbolises the fetters which bound Our Divine Lord to the pillar and the Cross He bore on His shoulders; while from its being worn round the neck it symbolises the yoke of the Lord; and from its being a garment of honour it symbolises the garment of sanctifying grace and immortality lost by the fall of Adam and restored in Christ.

Q. *What is the chasuble?*

A. The chasuble is the vestment which the priest wears at Mass over the alb and stole.

Q. *Of what material and colour is the chasuble made?*

A. The chasuble is usually made of silk, and its colour varies with the feast or festival or season, or the special character of the Mass that is being celebrated, and is always the same colour as the maniple and the stole.

Q. *What is the origin of the chasuble ?*

A. The chasuble is derived from the *paenula*, the ordinary outer garment worn in the 3rd century in Rome.

Q. *What was the form of the paenula ?*

A. The *paenula* was a large round cloak covering the whole body with an opening in the top for the head to pass through, and as it protected the whole body, covering it, as it were, like a house, it grew in time to be called *casula* (a little house), from which the word chasuble is derived. In shape it was like our present cope closed all round.

Q. *How did the chasuble develop in the course of time ?*

A. In the 6th century it had become the distinctive dress of clerics, and by the 12th century it had become the special garment of priests not only at Mass but at other liturgical functions.

Q. *When did the chasuble undergo change of form ?*

A. From the 13th century on the custom was introduced of shortening the chasuble and cutting away the sides to secure freedom of movement ; by the 17th century it had attained the present form in which it hardly extends to the shoulders and leaves the arms completely free.

Q. *Is there a special ceremony still surviving that recalls the days when the chasuble covered the hands ?*

A. The ancient form of the chasuble, which cramped the movements of the celebrant's hands, is recalled when the deacon and sub-deacon at High Mass hold up the chasuble of the priest as he incenses the altar, though the altered shape of the chasuble leaves the celebrant's hands quite free.

Q. *What is the Roman form of the chasuble?*

A. The Roman chasuble is from 40 to 46 inches deep at the back and from 26 to 30 inches wide. It is

ornamented with ophreys forming a pillar behind and a T-cross in front, while the opening for the head is long and V-shaped.

Q. *What does the chasuble symbolise?*

A. The chasuble, in relation to the Passion, symbolises the Cross which Our Divine Lord bore, or the purple mantle that was put on Him in mockery, or the streams of blood that covered Him on the Cross ; as it is put on over all the other vestments it symbolises the charity that covers a multitude of sins ; as a yoke borne on the shoulders, it symbolises the sweet yoke of Our Divine Lord.

Q. *What is the cope?*

A. The cope (Latin *cappa*) was originally a rain-cloak (hence its alternative name *pluviale* from Latin *pluvia*, rain) provided with a hood, which was worn by the monks or the members of chapters in long processions as a protection from the rain or cold. It is now a richly ornamented mantle—worn over the alb or surplice—which reaches to the feet, is open in the front and held fast by a hook-and-eye arrangement or by a morse (or formale). The hood, which was formerly used to protect the head, developed between the 11th and 14th centuries into a merely ornamented piece, which is semi-circular in shape, and reaches almost to the waist at the back.

Q. *By whom may the cope be worn?*

A. It may be worn by any sacred minister or even server.

Q. *Of what material is it made?*

A. It is made usually of silk or poplin but no definite material is prescribed.

Q. *Of what colour must it be?*

A. The colour of the vestments of the day, but white for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

2.—*Of Inferior Ministers*

Q. *Enumerate the distinct liturgical vestments of inferior ministers, that is, of the deacon and sub-deacon.*

A. The special liturgical vestments of the inferior ministers are the dalmatic, the tunic, the folded chasuble and the stolone.

Q. *What is the dalmatic?*

A. The dalmatic is a robe with wide sleeves which reaches to the knees, is closed in front, and is open at the sides as far as the shoulder.

Q. *By whom and when is the dalmatic worn?*

A. The dalmatic is worn by the deacon at High Mass, processions and benedictions, except on certain occasions of a penitential character.

Q. *Of what material and colour is the dalmatic?*

A. The dalmatic is made of the same material and colour as the chasuble or the cope worn by the celebrant.

Q. *What is the origin of the dalmatic?*

A. The dalmatic was originally a long, flowing robe with short, wide sleeves native to Dalmatia (hence its name) and introduced in the 2nd century of the Christian era into the Roman civil costume. In the course of time, as in the case of the chasuble, it was shortened and slit at the sides.

Q. *Was the dalmatic always the official dress of the deacon?*

A. At one time the Pope alone had the right to wear the dalmatic as a mark of distinction; later on as a special mark of honour the right was conferred by the Pope on individual bishops, and it was not until the 9th century that it became the distinctive garment of deacons.

Q. *What is the distinctive ornamentation of the dalmatic?*

A. The distinctive ornamentation of the dalmatic consists of two narrow vertical strips, called *clavi*, running from the shoulder to the hem, and united at the bottom by two narrow cross-strips.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the dalmatic?*

A. The dalmatic, which up to the 13th century was a white vestment adorned with two vertical strips of red material, symbolises purity from the colour of its first material, and love from the colour of its first ornamentation.

Q. *What is the tunic?*

A. The tunic is the vestment worn by the sub-deacon at High Mass and other functions, and is, nowadays, similar in every respect to the dalmatic.

Q. *What is the origin of the tunic of the sub-deacon?*

A. The tunic was originally the same as the alb, which, by the dropping of the cincture and the use of finer material was transformed, out of the growing appreciation of the office of sub-deacon, into a dalmatic-like vestment with sleeves longer and narrower than those of the deacon's garment.

Q. *What does the tunic symbolise?*

A. The tunic, and for that matter the dalmatic, are considered in the prayers of the Church as garments of joy and symbolic of justification through sanctifying grace.

Q. *Are the dalmatic and the tunic worn only by the deacon and sub-deacon, respectively?*

A. The bishop at Pontifical Mass and at the Ordination ceremony, for instance, wears the tunic and dalmatic under the chasuble to express his possession of the fulness of the priesthood, but in the case of the bishop the tunic and dalmatic are made of light silk material.

Q. *What is the folded chasuble?*

A. The folded chasuble is a chasuble shortened in front, used by the deacon and sub-deacon in cathedral and other special churches during Advent and Lent and other penitential days, and is a survival of the time when the chasuble was worn alike by priests, deacons and sub-deacons.

Q. *Why is it called a folded chasuble?*

A. Because it was the custom for the sub-deacon to fold up his chasuble before reading the Epistle, to make his hands free to hold the book, and for the deacon to fold up the chasuble in the form of a scarf and wear it over his left shoulder and under his right arm from the Gospel to the *Communio* of the Mass.

Q. *What remnants of that custom survive?*

A. The sub-deacon on certain Sundays in Advent and Lent and other penitential days takes off the folded chasuble before the Epistle and resumes it immediately after it, while the deacon removes the folded chasuble before he receives the Gospel book, and puts on another vestment, which he wears until the *Communio* of the Mass.

Q. *What is the name of the vestment the deacon puts on?*

A. The vestment is called a stolone which he wears over his stole, and which was introduced to avoid the difficulty of folding the chasuble and arranging it so as to fit like a stole.

Q. *Is the stolone a stole?*

A. The stolone is not a stole—though it looks like one—and for that reason it should not be ornamented with a cross. It takes the place of a folded-up chasuble.

Other Vestments Common to Dignitaries, Priests and Clerics

Q. *What other vestments are worn by dignitaries, priests and clerics?*

A. The soutane, the biretta, the surplice and the rochet.

Q. *What is the soutane?*

A. The soutane or cassock is a long, close tunic reaching to the feet. It is the ordinary dress of clerics.

Q. *What is the colour of the soutane?*

A. The colour of the soutane for the Pope is white, for cardinals red, for bishops violet, and for priests and other clerics black.

Q. *What is the biretta?*

A. The biretta is a square cap with three, sometimes four, ridges or peaks on its upper surface, and now generally surmounted by a tuft.

Q. *What is the origin of the biretta?*

A. The biretta was originally a kind of skull cap (*pileus*—hence the term *pileolus*, the skull cap worn by bishops) which developed into a soft, round cap, to which afterwards the peaks were added to allow of its being easily put on and taken off.

Q. *What is the colour of the biretta?*

A. The colour of the biretta for a cardinal is red, for a bishop violet—since 1887, and for a priest and other clerics black, but domestic prelates wear a black biretta with violet tuft.

Q. *What is the surplice?*

A. The surplice or cotta is a wide-sleeved tunic of half-length, made of linen or cotton, and is the choir dress for priests and clerics, and the vestment worn by priests in administering the sacraments.

Q. *Is it a distinctive vestment?*

A. The surplice is the distinctive vestment of the cleric, and is imposed on him by the bishop immediately after tonsure has been given.

Q. *Account for its name, "superpelliceum" (surplice).*

A. The surplice was originally a wide-sleeved, ungirdled alb, worn over (*supra*) the fur garments [(*vestes*)

pellieace] that used to be worn in choir by the clergy in cold northern climates.

Q. *What is the rochet?* *

A. The rochet, like the surplice, is derived from the alb, and differs from the surplice in having longer and narrower sleeves, and in being always ornamented with lace.

Q. *How is the rochet worn?*

A. The rochet is regarded as the sign of jurisdiction, and is worn by bishops in their diocese under a small cape called the mozzetta and outside their diocese under a large cape which entirely covers it, and which is called the mantelletta.

Q. *May any others besides bishops wear the rochet?*

A. It is worn by prelates under the mantelletta, and by canons under a surplice.

Q. *When did the rochet become a vestment of special distinction?*

A. In the Middle Ages outside Rome it was the characteristic dress of clerics, but in Rome from the 9th century it was reserved for bishops, prelates and canons.

Q. *Of what material are the vestments made?*

A. The amice and alb are made of linen; the cincture of linen, hemp, or even silk; the maniple, stole, chasuble, cope, dalmatic and tunic are made of silk, may be of cloth of gold or cloth of silver, or in poor churches of a mixture of silk and cotton.

Q. *Must all these vestments be blessed?*

A. It is of obligation to bless the amice, alb, maniple, stole and chasuble.

Q. *By whom may the vestments be blessed?*

A. The vestments may be blessed by a bishop, by a parish priest within his parish, or by any priest to whom the bishop gives the requisite faculties.

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* Special to dignitaries.

Q. *Is the Church very conservative in the matter of the style and cut of the liturgical vestments?*

A. Any departure in style and cut from the accepted use of the Church by way of return to ancient modes and forms is forbidden without previously consulting the Apostolic See (S. C. R., 9th Dec., 1925).

This would seem to be directed against the movement to reintroduce the ample antique vestments.

B.—The Insignia of a Bishop

Q. *Enumerate the insignia of a bishop.*

A. The buskins, the sandals, the pectoral cross, the tunicles, the mitre, the gloves, the ring, the crosier, the mozzetta, the cappa magna, the zuchetto, the morse, the mantelletta, the gremial veil.

Q. *What are the buskins?*

A. The buskins are ceremonial stockings reaching to the knees. They are made of silk fabric interwoven with gold threads, are often heavily embroidered, and are worn over the ordinary violet stockings proper to a bishop.

Q. *What are the sandals?*

A. The sandals, as worn now, are really shoes, the uppers of which are made of silk fabric and ornamented with embroidery.

Q. *Of what colour must the buskins and sandals be?*

A. The buskins and uppers of the sandals were first made of linen, and were then always white in colour, but since the substitution of silk for linen in the 13th century their colour varies with the colour of the vestments.

Q. *What is the origin of the buskins and sandals?*

A. They are derived from the footwear—the *compagus* and the *udo*—of the upper classes in Rome which

was adopted as the distinctive footwear of Roman clerics, and which with the spread of the Roman rite throughout Western Europe became the insignia of bishops.

Q. *What is the pectoral cross?*

A. The pectoral cross is a golden cross which a bishop wears on his breast. It contains relics of the martyrs and is suspended, by an ornamented cord, from the neck.

Q. *What is the origin of the pectoral cross?*

A. The pectoral cross is derived from the enkolpia worn by the early Christians to remind them of Christ.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the pectoral cross?*

A. The relics recall the sufferings and triumphs of the saints, and the cross serves as a reminder of the source of heavenly protection against the assaults of evil.

Q. *What are the tunicles?*

A. The tunicles are the dalmatic and tunic the bishop wears under the chasuble at Pontifical High Mass and other functions, and testify to the fulness of the priesthood with which the bishop is endowed.

Q. *What is the mitre?*

A. The mitre is a kind of folding cap consisting of two like parts each stiffened by a lining and rising to a peak, which are sewn together on the sides, but are united above by a piece of material that can fold together, two lappets or fanons, fringed at the extremities, hanging down at the back.

Q. *What is the origin of the mitre?*

A. The mitre is derived from a round soft cap with an ornamented circular band worn by bishops at the end of the 11th century. In the upper part of this cap an indentation was made as in the modern "Trilby," and the puffs in the sides developed into horns or peaks which ended in a point; and finally, about the middle of the 12th century, the manner of wearing

the mitre was so altered that the horns stood above the forehead and the back of the head, the lappets being added on at the back after the fashion of the contemporary civil headgear.

Q. *How many classes of mitres are there?*

A. There are three distinct kinds of mitre—viz., the precious mitre made of cloth of gold or white silk, and most elaborately ornamented with precious stones, gold, etc. ; the cloth of gold mitre made of plain cloth of gold ; the simple mitre made of white silk or linen and with lappets fringed with red.

Q. *By whom are mitres worn?*

A. Mitres are worn by cardinals, bishops, abbots, and other dignitaries—e.g., Protonotaries Apostolic.

Q. *What does the mitre symbolise?*

A. The horns symbolise the love of God and of one's neighbour, as well as the Old and New Testaments. The circular band is the image of the bishop who from the treasures of both Testaments enriches the faithful, and the lappets symbolise the spirit and the letter, the mystical and the literal interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures. In relation to the Passion the mitre represents the Crown of Thorns, and in the consecration ceremony it is considered as the helmet of salvation.

Q. *Describe the gloves worn by a bishop.*

A. The gloves which a bishop wears up to the Offertory are made of silk, and are embroidered with gold on the back and on the wrists.

Q. *What is the colour of these gloves?*

A. The episcopal gloves were white in colour from their introduction in the 10th century up to the 13th century. After that time their colour varied with the colour of the vestments, but, like the buskins and sandals, they are not worn with black vestments.

Q. *What is their symbolism?*

A. The gloves ensuring the cleanness of the hands symbolises the purity of heart with which the bishop should approach the offering up of the Holy Sacrifice.

Q. *Describe the bishop's ring.*

A. The bishop's ring is a gold ring set with a precious stone, which the bishop wears on the fourth finger of the right hand.

Q. *When was the wearing of the ring introduced?*

A. The wearing of the ring began in Spain in the 7th century, but was not adopted in Rome until the 12th century.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the ring?*

A. As suggested in the consecration ceremony the ring symbolises the seal of true faith and the espousals which the bishop contracts with his diocese.

Q. *What is the crosier?*

A. The crosier is a staff usually made of tubular metal plated with silver or gold, or of pure gold or silver, or sometimes of highly wrought wood, and is generally made up of several parts that can be screwed together.

Q. *What is the shape of the crosier?*

A. The crosier is pointed at the bottom, straight in the middle and bent at the top.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the crosier?*

A. The pointed end symbolises that the bishop should goad on the lazy, the shaft that he should support the weak, and the bent top that like a faithful shepherd he should bring back those who are wandering from his fold.

Q. *How is the crosier held?*

A. The crosier is held in the left hand, the crooked part being turned towards the people to gather in, as it were, those who are straying.

Q. *Does the Pope carry a crosier?*

A. The Pope does not carry a crosier, because the bent top symbolises a restricted jurisdiction.

Q. *What is the gremial veil?*

A. The gremial veil is a silken apron of the colour of the vestments, or on certain occasions a white linen apron, which the bishop wears over his knees when he sits down.

Q. *What purpose does it serve?*

A. The purpose of the gremial veil is to save the chasuble or cope from getting soiled when—e.g. the bishop is distributing ashes or candles, or receiving candles from the candidates for ordination.

Q. *What is the mozzetta?*

A. The mozzetta is a cape with a small hood which is put on over the head, and is closed in front by means of a row of small buttons. It is made of silk or woollen fabric, and must be short enough to allow of the rochet being almost fully seen.

Q. *What is the colour of the mozzetta?*

A. The colour of the mozzetta for a bishop is violet or black with red facings, and buttonholes worked in red silk thread; the mozzetta of a cardinal is red (violet, however, in Lent), and that of a Pope is red (white in Easter week).

Q. *What does the mozzetta signify?*

A. The mozzetta signifies jurisdiction on the part of the wearer, and is worn by the Pope, cardinals, and by bishops within the limits of their diocese, by certain prelates of the Roman curia, and by other dignitaries by way of special privilege.

Q. *What is the origin of the mozzetta?*

A. The mozzetta is most probably an adaptation of a vestment called the *almucia*, a shoulder cape which in the Middle Ages was worn by certain chapters, but which now survives in the form of a mere ornament

worn on the left arm, or placed on the desk of the choir-stall ; others regard it a shortened form (hence its name "*mozzo*," meaning shortened) of the " cappa magna."

Q. *What is the " cappa magna " ?*

A. The " cappa magna " is the choir dress proper to a bishop.

Q. *Describe the " cappa magna " ?*

A. The " cappa magna," which came into use during the course of the 14th-15th centuries, is a cloak covering the whole person reaching down to the feet in front, and ending behind in a long train, and provided with a hood large enough to envelope the whole upper portion of the body, the hood being lined with white ermine or grey fur in winter, and with red silk in summer.

Q. *Who enjoy the privilege of wearing the " cappa magna " ?*

A. The privilege of wearing the " cappa magna " is reserved to cardinals, patriarchs, bishops, and some higher prelates.

Q. *What is the colour of the " cappa magna " ?*

A. The colour of the " cappa magna " for cardinals is red, but violet in Lent, and the colour for all others is violet, except in the case of regular bishops with special religious costume, whose " cappa magna " is the colour of their religious habit.

Q. *Do canons wear the " cappa magna " ?*

A. By special privilege the members of some chapters are allowed to wear the " cappa magna," but except for those the "cappa," which certain canons wear, is that known as the *cappa parva* (the small *cappa*). This "cappa," very much shortened in front, has the train tied up and borne on the left arm or gathered under it.

Q. *What is the origin of the " cappa magna " ?*

A. The " cappa magna " is derived from the hooded

choral cope that used to be worn at the Divine Office and in processions, and which was a winter mantle of black wool reaching to the feet.

Q. *What is the zuchetto or calotte?*

A. The zuchetto or calotte is a small skull-cap used by the Pope, cardinals and bishops, and by others with special privileges, and worn even under the biretta and the mitre.

Q. *What is the colour of the zuchetto?*

A. The colour of the zuchetto for the Pope is white, for a cardinal red, and for a bishop violet.

Q. *Is the zuchetto worn at Mass?*

A. The zuchetto is worn at Mass, but it must be removed from the beginning of the Preface to the end of the Communion.

Q. *What is the morse?*

A. The morse (formale) is an ornamental clasp of gold bearing a sacred device, which is worn by bishops, and which is attached to the front of the cope at the point where the cope is fastened.

Q. *What is the mantelletta?*

A. The mantelletta is a long cape which covers the rochet, and which is provided with opening at the sides. The name mantellone is given to a cape longer than the mantelletta and provided with wing-like sleeves. It is worn by inferior prelates.

Q. *By whom is the mantelletta worn?*

A. The mantelletta is worn by prelates and by bishops outside the territory of their jurisdiction.

Q. *What is the colour and material of the mantelletta?*

A. The mantelletta is like the mozzetta in colour, material and facings, etc.

Q. *What is the ordinary house dress of a bishop?*

A. The ordinary house dress of a bishop is the zimarra—a cassock or soutane with a short cape and

over-sleeves reaching to the elbow—with cincture of violet silk.

Q. *What is the colour of the zimarra?*

A. It is black with red piping and buttons, and with buttonholes worked in red silk thread.

Q. *What is the bugia (or palmatoria)?*

A. The bugia is a low-sized candlestick provided with a short straight handle, and is held with a lighted candle at the Book by the first chaplain at the bishop's Low Mass, and by an acolyte at solemn functions in which a bishop takes part.

Q. *Why is the bugia so called?*

A. Because the wax employed in its manufacture used to be procured from Bougie, a town in the north of Algiers.

Q. *What is the faldstool?*

A. The faldstool is a four-legged stool with arms, a kind of folding or collapsible chair which the bishop uses either as a seat or as a prie-dieu in sacred functions outside his own diocese or within it, when he is not on his throne.

Q. *What is the throne?*

A. The throne is a high-backed armchair surmounted by a baldacchino, and standing on a platform or predella led up to by three steps.

Q. *How is the throne decorated?*

A. The platform is covered with a carpet, and the chair is draped with a silk covering of the same colour as the vestments, cloth of gold, however, being used only when the bishop is a cardinal.

C.—The Insignia of an Archbishop

Q. *What are the insignia proper to an archbishop?*

A. The insignia proper to an archbishop are the pallium and the cross that is borne before him.

Q. *What is the pallium?*

A. The pallium is a band about two inches wide encircling the shoulders from which depend two lappets —one in front and one behind—about 9 inches long by about 2 inches wide. The band and lappets are made of white wool, and are adorned with six crosses worked in black silk thread, four fixed on to the band, and one on each lappet. To each lappet is attached a small thin piece of metal rounded at the ends and covered over with black silk. The half of the band which passes over the left shoulder is twice as thick as that which passes over the right shoulder. Three crosses of the band have three loops of black silk thread to hold the golden pins with heads of precious stones called "*spinulae*" that are attached by way of ornament to the pallium.

Q. *How is the wool of the pallium procured?*

A. On the Feast of St. Agnes two lambs are blessed in the Basilica of St. Agnes in the Via Nomentana, and the wool of these lambs is woven by nuns to form the palliums.

Q. *How are the palliums blessed?*

A. The palliums are blessed by the Pope himself, or by the officiating cardinal after first vespers of the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul in the "Confessio" in which the body of St. Peter is kept.

Q. *What takes place after the blessing?*

A. The palliums are left for one night on the altar of the tomb of St. Peter. They are put in a silver-gilt casket which is kept above the Chair of St. Peter in the "Confessio," and near the body.

Q. *How is the pallium bestowed on an archbishop?*

A. The archbishop must apply to the Pope for the pallium within three months of his consecration or accession to the archiepiscopal see. He may proceed

to Rome for it, and it is conferred on him by the Pope. In case the archbishop cannot proceed to Rome it is forwarded to him, and generally put on him for the first time by his senior suffragan bishop in a solemn function in the Metropolitan Church.

Q. *Who are entitled to wear the pallium?*

A. The Pope, archbishops, and other bishops, as a mark of special Papal honour.

Q. *Is it important for an archbishop to secure the pallium?*

A. It is most important, for until he receives the pallium he cannot exercise any function requiring episcopal orders, nor does he enjoy the privilege of having the cross carried before him.

Q. *What gives the pallium an unique place amongst ecclesiastical insignia?*

A. The pallium is an ornament that is at once personal and territorial.

Q. *What consequence does this twofold characteristic involve?*

A. If an archbishop be transferred from one metropolitan see to another he must apply for a new pallium, and the two palliums will be buried with him.

Q. *What does the pallium symbolise?*

A. The pallium is a Papal and archiepiscopal ornament, and symbolises the plenitude of episcopal power which resides in the Pope, by virtue of his office as Chief Pastor of the Faithful, and which resides in the metropolitan by virtue of his participation of that fulness of power bestowed upon him by the Pope for exercise within the limits of his province.

Q. *How are the palliums said to be given?*

A. They are said to be "given from the body of St. Peter," through their being stored in the Confessio of St. Peter's.

Q. *What dogmatic truth does that phrase suggest?*

A. It suggests that the spiritual power symbolised by the pallium goes back to St. Peter immediately in the case of the Pope, and mediately through the Pope, in the case of the metropolitan.

Q. *What is the origin of the pallium?*

A. The pallium is derived from the "*humerale*" or "*omophorion*"—a woollen vestment somewhat like an amice—which was worn by the bishops of the East, and adopted in the 4th century as a garment distinctive of their episcopal office. In the Western Church it was worn at first by the Pope alone, and in the course of time its use was extended to archbishops.

Q. *What is the archiepiscopal cross?*

A. The archiepiscopal cross is the same as an ordinary processional cross, and is borne before the archbishop with the figure turned towards him, whenever he proceeds to or from an ecclesiastical function.

Q. *Why is the cross so borne?*

A. To remind the archbishop that his glory is in the Cross, and that his life, like that of his Divine Master, is to be one of mortification and self-denial.

D.—The Insignia of the Pope

Q. *What is the Pope's dress in private audience?*

A. The Pope in private audience wears a white silk soutane and skull-cap, shoes of red velvet ornamented with a cross embroidered in gold.

Q. *What is the choral dress of the Pope?*

A. The Pope in choir is ordinarily dressed in white stockings, red shoes, white soutane and skull-cap, broad cincture with golden tassels, lace rochet, red mozzetta trimmed with white ermine, and a stole. During Easter week he wears a white mozzetta.

Q. *What are the insignia of the Pope?*

A. The insignia of the Pope are the falda, the subcinctorium, the fanon, the tiara, and the sedes gestatoria.

Q. *What is the falda?*

A. The falda is a wide robe of white silk with a train, which the Pope wears on great occasions, and which is put on immediately over the soutane.

Q. *What is the subcinctorium?*

A. The subcinctorium is a vestment like a maniple which is attached by way of mere ornament to the left side of the cincture.

Q. *What is the fanon?*

A. The fanon is a shoulder cape with an aperture in the centre for the head to pass through, consisting of two pieces of white silk of oval shape sewn together near the opening, and ornamented with narrow woven stripes of red and gold, the under piece of silk falling over the shoulders on to the alb, the upper piece falling on to the chasuble.

Q. *What is the tiara?*

A. The tiara, worn by the Pope as he proceeds to and from solemn functions of exceptional pomp, is the Papal diadem richly decked with pearls and precious stones, pointed at the top, ornamented by a small cross and surrounded by three crowns.

Q. *Trace the history of the Papal tiara.*

A. The first mention of it is met with in the Constitutions of Constantine (dating from the 8th century), in which is recorded the legend that the Emperor Constantine offered Pope Silvester his crown by way of gift. On the Pope's refusing to wear a golden crown, the Emperor substituted for it a conical-shaped biretta of shining white to which the name *frigio* or camelauco was given, and which was worn only on the occasion of solemn processions.

Soon it came to be regarded as distinctive of the

supreme dignity of the Bishop of Rome, and in the 9th century was known as the *Regnum* (the Kingdom); but it was not until the 10th century that it was ornamented with a crown.

A second crown was added by Boniface VIII—the double crown, indicating the twofold power of the Pope, viz., his direct power in religious affairs, his indirect power in political matters.

By 1315 a third crown was added to express the triple power of the Pope, viz., the three spiritual powers of teaching, ruling and sanctifying, or his triple office as Prophet, Priest and Pastor, or his qualities of knowledge, power and jurisdiction. Some find in the triple crown a symbol of the Church militant, suffering and triumphant (*cf. Alma Mater.* Tardini, 1924.)

Q. *What words are used when the new Pope is crowned with the tiara?*

A. Words that should fill us with awe and reverence for the exalted dignity of the Holy Father:

"Receive this tiara, ornamented with three crowns, and know that you are the Father of Princes and of Kings, Ruler of the world and Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ upon earth."

Q. *What is the "sedes gestatoria"?*

A. The sedes gestatoria is the seat on which the Pope is borne to and from the Basilica of St. Peter's on certain occasions of great solemnity. Behind the *sedes gestatoria* are carried two gigantic fans, called *flabelli*, which are placed against the sides of the Papal throne during the sacred function over which the Pope presides.

Q. *Account for the phrase "under the seal of the Fisherman."*

A. The ring which the Pope wears has for seal a representation of St. Peter casting his nets into the sea.

Chapter VIII

THE LITURGICAL BOOKS

Q. Enumerate the chief liturgical books.

A. The Missal, the Ritual, the Pontifical, the Ceremonial of Bishops, the Martyrology, the *Memoriale Rituum* (the Memorial of Rites), and the Breviary.

Q. *What is the Missal?*

A. The Missal is the liturgical book used at Mass. It contains the Rubrics of the Mass, the Ordinary of the Mass, the various Masses that may be said throughout the year, and some special blessings having relation to the Mass—e.g. the Blessing of holy water, of sacred vestments, etc.

Q. *What is the Ordinary of the Mass?*

A. The Ordinary of the Mass consists of those parts of the Mass which, with a few exceptions, are unchanged in every Mass in which they occur and which, for the most part, occur in every Mass that is said.

Q. *What are the ordinary parts of the Mass?*

A. The prayers at the foot of the altar, the prayers recited as the priest ascends the altar, the *Kyrie*, the *Gloria*, the *Munda Cor*, the *Credo*, the Offertory prayers, the Incense prayers, the fourteen Prefaces (as sung and as recited), the Canon, the Communion prayers, the *Placeat*, the Blessing, the Last Gospel. Originally the Canon was the only Ordinary of the Mass.

Q. *Where is the Ordinary of the Mass placed?*

A. Roughly towards the middle of the Missal, it being inserted between the Mass of Holy Saturday and the Mass of Easter Sunday. It is inserted there, as a

mere matter of convenience, as a place at which the book would remain open most easily. This plan was first chosen in the " Missal according to the custom of the Roman Curia," which was spread all over Europe through the influence of the early Franciscans.

Q. *How is the Missal divided?*

A. The Missal may be divided into seven distinct parts :—

1. The *Proprium de Tempore* (the Proper of the Season), within which, as we have seen, the Ordinary of the Mass is placed.
2. The *Proprium Sanctorum* (the Proper of the Saints).
3. The *Commune Sanctorum* (the Common of the Saints).
4. *Missæ Votivæ et Orationes diversæ* (the Votive Masses and Divers Prayers).
5. *Missæ Defunctorum et Orationes diversæ pro defunctis* (the Masses of the Dead and Divers Prayers for the Dead).
6. *Pro aliquibus locis* (Masses proper to certain places, churches, towns, dioceses).
7. Supplements for various countries (for feasts proper to Ireland, England, France, etc.).

Q. *What Masses does the section called the Proper of the Season contain?*

A. It opens with the Mass of the First Sunday of Advent and goes right on to the Masses of Christmas (with those of the Saints whose feasts are celebrated within the Octave of Christmas), the Masses of the Epiphany and the Sundays after Epiphany, of Septuagesima, of Lent (Sundays as well as ferials), of Easter and its season, of Pentecost, of Trinity Sunday and the Sundays after Pentecost, with the Masses for the four Quarter Tense periods in the order of their occurrence.

Q. *What Masses does the Proprium Sanctorum (the Proper of the Saints) contain?*

A. This second section begins with the Feast that falls on the 29th November, and gives in order of time the Masses for the Feasts of Our Lord, of Our Lady, of the Angels and of the Saints attached to definite days of the civil year with the Vigil Masses of certain Feasts.

Q. *Is the full Mass always given in the Proper of the Saints?*

A. If the whole of the Mass be proper the full Mass is given, but very often, as it is only a portion of the Mass that is proper (e.g. the Collect, the Secret and Post-communion, less often the Epistle, the Gospel), the proper parts of the Mass are given in the Proper of the Saints, special reference being made in the Proper to the particular Mass of the Common from which the remaining parts are to be taken.

Q. *What is the Commune Sanctorum (the Common of the Saints)?*

A. As a considerable number of Saints whose feasts occur during the year have neither Proper Mass nor proper prayers in the *Proprium Sanctorum* (the Proper of the Saints), certain Masses are assigned in the third section of the Missal for various classes of Saints, falling under the respective categories of a martyr, of many martyrs (when several martyrs have a feast in common), of confessors who are bishops, of confessors who are not bishops, of virgins who are martyrs, of virgins simply, of widows. To these is added a Mass for the Dedication of a Church.

Q. *What is the ordinary change in this Mass taken from the Common?*

A. The proper name of the Saint of the day is inserted in the Collect and the prayers of the Mass.

Q. *What is a Votive Mass?*

A. A Votive Mass is one which does not correspond to the office of the day, and it is so called because it is said, when the Rubrics allow, at the *votum* (or wish) of the celebrant or person for whose intention the Mass is being said.

Q. *How are the Votive Masses arranged in the Missal?*

A. In the more recent Missals the Votive Masses are arranged into four groups :—

1. The Votive Masses of Our Lord, e.g. of the Blessed Sacrament.
2. The Votive Masses of Our Lady.
3. The Votive Masses of various Saints.
4. The Votive Masses for various persons or needs, and after the Votive Masses come *Orationes Diversæ* (divers or occasional prayers) for various persons and needs for which a special Votive Mass is not assigned.

Q. *How many Masses of the Dead are there in the Missal?*

A. Four :—1. The group of three for All Souls' Day.

2. The Mass to be said on the day of death or burial, which—except for the Collect and prayers—is the Mass assigned for the third, seventh and thirtieth day (the month's mind) after death or burial.
3. The Mass to be said on the anniversary of the death.
4. The Common Mass of the Dead to be said in the cases not provided for in the first three.

   To these are added Collects and prayers proper to certain persons, Pope, bishop, priest, parents, relations and benefactors, a layman, a woman, etc.

Q. *Does the Missal date from the earliest days of the Church?*

A. The first form of the Missal came into being about the 10th century.

Q. *What was used previous to that period?*

A. Different books were used for the celebrant, the deacon, the sub-deacon and the choir.

Q. *What was the name given to the book used by the celebrant?*

A. It was called the Sacramentary (the Book of the Sacred Mysteries), and contained, besides the manner of administering some of the sacraments—baptism, for instance—those parts of the High Mass that were sung or recited by the celebrant (the Collect and prayers, the Preface, the Canon, Pater Noster, etc.).

Q. *How many of these Sacramentaries survive?*

A. Three, called respectively :—

The Leonine Sacramentary.—So called, because it is attributed by its first editor to Pope Leo I (461).

The Gelasian Sacramentary, called after Pope Gelasius I (496).

The Gregorian Sacramentary, called after Pope Gregory the Great (604).

On these Sacramentaries are based our present Missal, many of the Collects, etc., and those amongst the most beautiful of our present Missal, being taken from the Sacramentaries.

Q. *What are the names given to the other books?*

A. The sub-deacon sang from the *Epistolarium* (Epistolary, book of the Epistles).

The deacon sang from the *Evangeliarium* (Evangelary, book of the Gospels).

The choir sang from the *Antiphonarium* (Antiphonary) or the *Graduale*, as it was called to distinguish it from the Antiphonary used in the singing of the Divine Office.

Q. *Account for the form of the Missal now in use.*

A. It is due to the introduction of the Low Mass when all the parts of the Mass were recited by the celebrant and were put into one book, called the *Missale Plenum* (the full Missal), for the convenience of the celebrant. The definite and general adoption of the *Missale Plenum* was secured by the appearance in the late Middle Ages of the "Missal and Breviary according to the custom of the Roman Curia." The official publication of the Missal for general use took place in 1570. The Missal is undergoing constant revision, and important additions have been made by Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV and Pius XI.

Q. *What is the great argument for the use of the Missal by the faithful?*

A. "The Missal is the living and authentic commentary on the great Eucharistic mystery. It is the language spoken by Christ in His Eucharistic silence. It is the Church that speaks to us through the Missal, and in the voice of the Spouse we hear the voice of Christ Himself. In the Mass Christ Himself prays for us. We hear His voice in the Gospel. In all the Masses of the liturgical cycle we live over again, as it were, His life and His teaching" (Beauduin).

Q. *What is the Ritual?*

A. The Ritual contains the formulas and rubrics for the administration of the Sacraments and sacramentals, for the carrying out of the funeral service, of liturgical processions, and for many blessings of persons, places and things in all of which a priest may function.

Q. *What is the Pontifical?*

A. The Pontifical may be regarded as the Ritual of the bishop. It contains the formulas and rubrics for the administration of those Sacraments which bishops administer—Confirmation and Holy Orders; for the consecrations and blessings proper to a bishop—e.g.

the consecration of a church, of an altar, the blessing of the church bell, the consecration of a chalice, of a paten, etc.

The prayers of preparation for and thanksgiving after the Mass and the Ordinary of the Mass are for a bishop's Mass consigned to a book called the Canon.

Q. *What is the Ceremoniale Episcoporum* (the Ceremonial of bishops)?

A. This book presents in detail the ceremonies of the various functions that take place in cathedral or collegiate churches.

Q. *What is the Martyrology?*

A. The Martyrology gives for each day of the year the list of Saints whose feasts are celebrated or commemorated on each particular day, either through the whole Church or in special countries or dioceses or churches. It includes also the Feasts of Our Lord and of Our Lady.

Q. *Why is it called the Martyrology?*

A. Because originally the book contained mostly the names of martyrs.

Q. *When is it used?*

A. It is used at the Office of Prime when the Divine Office is said in choir, and is recommended for use by all those who are bound to the daily office.

Q. *What is the Memoriale Rituum* (the Memorial of Rites)?

A. It is a liturgical book drawn up by Pope Benedict XIV for use in parish churches in which, through the fewness of priests, certain functions of importance cannot be carried out in solemn liturgical form—viz., the ceremonies of the 2nd February, of Ash Wednesday, of Palm Sunday, and of the last three days of Holy Week.

Q. *What is the Breviary?*

A. The Breviary is the liturgical book containing

the text of the Divine Office which the Church prescribes to be sung or read daily in its name by its sacred ministers and members of certain religious orders.

Q. *Of what does the Divine Office consist in the main?*

A. It consists of Psalms with their Antiphons, of Hymns, Lessons with their Responses, Versicles and their Responses and Prayers—arranged according to prescribed rules.

Q. *What are the divisions of the Daily Office?*

A. The Daily Office consists of seven canonical hours, viz.:—Matins and Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline.

Q. *How is the Breviary divided?*

A. It is divided into four sections corresponding to the seasons of the year, and called respectively the Winter, the Spring, the Summer, and the Autumn Quarter.

Q. *How is each Quarter arranged?*

A. Somewhat as the Missal is arranged, with Proper of the Season (or Time), Proper of the Saints and Common of the Saints, etc. In addition, before the Proper of the Season there are placed the *Ordinary*—what is in general common to every Office—and the *Psalter* which contains the psalms of the Office arranged according to the days of the week and the canonical hours.

Section II

THE MASS

Chapter IX

THE ASPERGES

Q. *What is the Asperges?*

A. The Asperges is a ceremony in which the celebrant sprinkles holy water according to prescribed rules before the principal Mass on Sundays.

Q. *Why is it called the Asperges?*

A. From the first word of the Antiphon the celebrant recites (or intones) *Asperges me hyssopo et mundabor*, etc. ("Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed"—Ps. 50, v. 9). During Eastertide this Antiphon is replaced by the Antiphon *Vidi aquam egredientem de templo a latere dextro, alleluia* (I saw water issuing from the temple on the right side, *alleluia*).

Q. *In what does the ceremony consist?*

A. The celebrant (with deacon and sub-deacon at High Mass) goes to the foot of the altar and sprinkles the altar three times, and then himself (and the attendant sacred ministers) intoning the Antiphon *Asperges*, etc. He then sprinkles the laity, saying in a low voice the Psalm 50 *Miserere* (have mercy on me, O God, etc.). At Eastertide besides the change of the Antiphon there is a change of psalm, Psalm 117, *Confitemini Domino* ("Give praise to the Lord") being said. The Antiphon is repeated at the end of the psalm, versicles and responses are recited (or sung), and then a prayer concludes the ceremony.

Q. *What is the significance of this ceremony?*

A. This ceremony, which dates from the 8th century, aims at purifying our hearts—for holy (or as it is sometimes called, lustral) water is a sacramental calculated to remove venial sin—and thus prepare us for fit assistance at the august Sacrifice of the Mass.

'The sprinkling with water serves to remind us, too, of the graces we received at baptism and of the obligations the reception of that great sacrament imposed on us.

The Mass in Detail

The Mass of the Catechumens

Q. *What is the origin of the word "Mass"?*

A. The word "Mass" is derived from the low Latin missa missio, meaning a dismissal, and it came to be applied to the Holy Sacrifice from the striking ceremony of the separate dismissals of the Catechumens, public penitents and energumens before the Offertory, and of the faithful at the close of the sacred function.* From the 6th or 7th century it is the usual name for the Eucharistic Sacrifice in the Western Church. Other names in earlier use were *oblatio*, *sacrificium*, *dominicum*, and *mysterium*.

Q. *Does that ceremony of dismissal still survive?*

A. The ceremony of dismissal still survives in the phrase "*Ite, missa est*" (Go, you are dismissed), which is said by the priest at a Low Mass and sung by the deacon at a High Mass.

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* Contrast the view of St. Thomas Aquinas. "And from this the Mass derives its name (*Missa*); because the priest sends (*mitti*) his prayers up to God through the angel as the people do through the priest, or else because Christ is the Victim sent (*missa*) to us" (*Summa Theologica*, P. III, Q. 83, Art. 4).

Q. *Enumerate the various types of Masses in the order of their introduction.*

A. There are four distinct types of Masses:—

The Pontifical Mass (the solemn Mass of a bishop, with which may be associated—though there are vast differences—the Solemn Papal Mass).

Missa Cantata.

Solemn High Mass.

Low Mass.

Q. *What is the Pontifical Mass?*

A. The Pontifical Mass is a solemn Mass celebrated by a bishop attended by an assistant priest, a deacon, and a sub-deacon. If the bishop be the Ordinary, he is assisted by two assistant deacons at the throne and as well as by an assistant priest and by a deacon and a sub-deacon of the Mass (*v.* p. 177).

Q. *What is the Missa Cantata?*

A. The Missa Cantata is a Mass that is sung by a priest with the assistance of a choir (*v.* p. 177).

Q. *Why was this form of Mass introduced?*

A. The *Missa Cantata* was introduced to provide for the titular churches of Rome and to accommodate the needs of country parishes in which only one priest was available.

Q. *What is the Solemn High Mass?*

A. The Solemn High Mass is a Mass that is sung by a priest attended by two sacred ministers called the deacon and sub-deacon, and assisted by a choir and a number of servers called acolytes. It involves the use of incense and elaborate ceremonial (*v.* p. 173).

Q. *What is the origin of the Solemn High Mass?*

A. The High Mass is a development of the *Missa Cantata*, and was first introduced in monasteries where

there would naturally be at hand a number of sacred ministers.

Q. *What is the Low Mass?*

A. The Low Mass or Private Mass is a Mass none of which is sung but all of which is recited by the priest, who is the sole sacred minister engaged in carrying out the function.

Q. *Why is it called Low Mass?*

A. It is called Low Mass in contrast with the Solemn High Mass which, with its sacred ministers and its choir, its various incensations, etc., so much surpasses it in external pomp.

Q. *What is the origin of the Low Mass?*

A. It is derived from the Solemn High Mass, and it was introduced to cope with the needs of the ever-increasing Catholic population which required frequent Masses on the same day, to satisfy the desires of priests to celebrate daily, and to meet with the wishes of the faithful who were eager to have Masses offered up for their intentions, so as to participate more abundantly in the fruits of the Holy Sacrifice.

Q. *When did the Low Masses become general in the Western Church?*

A. Low Masses became general about the 9th century.

Q. *Are there any ceremonies still surviving in the Low Mass which suggest that it is derived from the High Mass?*

A. There are two ceremonies specially to be noted. While reading the Epistle the priest holds the Missal somewhat as the sub-deacon holds it at High Mass when he sings the Epistle, while at the Gospel the priest holds his hands joined together at his breast as the deacon does while he sings the Gospel at High Mass.

Q. *What is a conventual Mass?*

A. A conventual Mass is a Mass which is celebrated

daily in cathedral and collegiate churches (*v.* p. 17) and in the churches of regulars who are bound to sing or recite the Divine Office in choir.

Q. *Why is the Mass called "conventual"?*

A. Because the clergy or regulars who are bound to the Office in common choir are accustomed and are obliged to meet or come together (Latin *convenire*) for the Mass.

Q. *What is a "Dry Mass" (or Missa Sicca)?*

A. It is a truncated Mass—one without Offertory, Canon or Communion—which was common enough in the late Middle Ages and which used to be said, e.g. on occasions of pilgrimages when no priest, other than one who had broken his fast, was available. When priests were forbidden to say more than one Mass on a week-day many priests would celebrate a "Dry Mass" after their daily Mass out of special devotion to a Saint.

Q. *Why is it called "dry" (sicca)?*

A. The name is probably derived—though there is no connection between the two ceremonies—from the custom of giving "dry" communion to the sick (that is, communion under the species of bread at a time when communion used to be given to the faithful under both species).

Q. *Does the Missa Sicca survive in any form?*

A. The commemorations at Mass are traced to this custom. So is also the form of the Blessing of Palms.

Q. *How is the Mass divided?*

A. The Mass is divided into two main sections—the Mass of the Catechumens from the beginning to the Offertory; the Mass of the Faithful from the Offertory to the end.

Q. *Who were the Catechumens?*

A. The Catechumens were converts from paganism or from heresy who were under instruction for reception

into the Church, and who, according to the discipline of the time, were not admitted to the Holy Sacrifice proper until after their baptism on Holy Saturday.

Q. *In what respect does the Mass of the Catechumens differ from the Mass of the Faithful?*

A. The Mass of the Catechumens consists of instruction, psalms and prayers, while the Mass of the Faithful consists of the offering, the immolation and the communion.

Q. *Is the contrast between the two parts of the Mass very noticeable at the altar?*

A. The contrast is very noticeable, for, during the Mass of the Catechumens, the priest is, for the most part, reading at the side of the altar, while in the Mass of the Faithful he is, for the most part, at the centre of the altar. And again, in the first part of the Mass the chalice is covered with a veil, in the second part till after the communion it is uncovered.

Q. *How is that contrast between the two parts of the Mass most noticeably marked in a Pontifical Mass?*

A. In a Pontifical Mass, the Mass of the Catechumens takes place at the throne or faldstool, the Mass of the Faithful takes place at the altar.

Q. *What obvious conclusion is to be drawn from all this?*

A. That at one time the two parts were perfectly distinct functions, the first part being originally the recitation of the Divine Office with an instruction or sermon, the second part being the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

Q. *Name the elements of which the Mass of the Catechumens is composed?*

A. 1. The Prayers at the foot of the altar.
2. The Introit.
3. The Kyrie.
4. The Gloria.

A. The Prayers at the foot of the altar—*continued.*

5. The Collect.
6. The Epistle.
7. The Gradual, Alleluiatic Verse and Tract—singly or in combination. Sequence (occasionally).
8. The Gospel (and sermon).
9. The Credo.

Q. *What are the prayers recited at the foot of the altar?*

A. The prayers recited at the foot of the altar are the *Judica* Psalm, the Confiteor, and some versicles and responses.

Q. *What are the leading thoughts of the Judica Psalm?*

A. The *Judica* Psalm is an expression of reverent fear at approaching the altar of God and of childlike confidence in God's mercy.

The Antiphon that opens and concludes the psalm is expressive of joy at the privilege about to be exercised.

Q. *What is the purport of the Confiteor?*

A. The Confiteor, which should be said both by priest and people, is an humble confession of sinfulness before Heaven and earth, and an earnest petition that God may send the grace of pardon and make both priest and people less unworthy—the one to celebrate, the other to assist at, the august mystery of the Mass.

Q. *What is implied in the "Dominus vobiscum" and its response, "Et cum spiritu tuo"?*

A. It implies that the priest and the people are to be united at the celebration of Mass. The priest prays that the Lord may be with the faithful, that they may have right dispositions; and the faithful—in the person of the server—pray in turn that the spirit of God may be in the mind and the heart of the priest.

Q. *What is expressed in the prayers said by the priest as he ascends and kisses the altar?*

A. He prays that he and the faithful may be purified from their sins.

Q. *Why does he kiss the altar?*

A. To honour the relics of the martyrs that are contained in it, and to do reverence to Christ, Whom the altar symbolises.

Q. *What is the Introit?*

A. The Introit, which is the first variable portion of the Mass, consists of an Antiphon, a verse of a psalm, the *Gloria Patri*, etc.—the "Glory be to the Father,"—and the Antiphon repeated.

Q. *Why is it called the Introit?*

A. Because it was sung by the choir, while the sacred ministers and attendants made their entrance (*i.e.*, *introitus*) into the church and proceeded in solemn procession to the altar.

Q. *Was the Introit always of the same structure as it is to-day?*

A. Originally the Introit was a long psalm, but, in course of time, when the solemn processions did not take place, the psalm was reduced to its present proportions.

Q. *What is the significance of the Introit of the day?*

A. The Introit very often suggests the leading thought of the feast (Mass of the Epiphany), or the season (Advent Masses), or the occasion (some Station Masses).

Q. *Did the change of the Introit each day give rise to any well established custom?*

A. Many Sundays of the year came to be well known by the first word of their Introits, e.g. the Third Sunday of Advent is called *Gaudete* Sunday; the Fourth Sunday of Lent is called *Lætare* Sunday, and Low Sunday is known as *Quasimodo* Sunday.

Q. *Why does the priest make the sign of the Cross before he begins the Introit?*

A. Because the Introit was for a long time the beginning of the Mass, the preliminary prayers being originally private prayers said by the celebrant as a preparation for Mass in the sacristy or on his way to the altar.

Q. *When was the Introit introduced in the Mass?*

A. The Introit became part of the Mass in the time of Pope Celestine, who sent St. Patrick as Apostle to Ireland.

Q. *From what sources are the Introits taken?*

A. The Introits are taken for the most part from the Psalms, and occasionally from the Sapiential books, and even ecclesiastical compositions (*cf.* the Votive Masses of Our Lady). The text does not always correspond to the Vulgate. The older Latin version, on account of the music to which the Introits were set, is still retained in many instances.

Q. *What is the Kyrie, eleison?*

A. The *Kyrie, eleison* is a threefold invocation for mercy which is addressed to each Person of the Blessed Trinity by the priest and—through the server—by the faithful. It is an eager cry for pardon for sin in preparation for the sublime mystery that is about to be accomplished.

Q. *What is the origin of the Kyrie, eleison?*

A. In earlier times it was the custom for the clergy and the faithful to assemble at an appointed place and proceed to the church, where what was called the Station Mass of the day was to be celebrated, litanies being recited *en route*. Of these litanies the *Kyrie, eleison* is a remnant.

Q. *Does the ancient custom survive in any form?*

A. The custom still survives in the Litany of the Saints, with doubled invocations, which is recited on Holy Saturday as the sacred ministers and clergy

march in procession from the Baptismal Font to the High Altar.

Q. *Account for the use of the Greek expression "Kyrie, eleison."*

A. It is a survival of the time up the 2nd or 3rd century, when Greek was the language of the liturgy.

Q. *What is the Gloria in excelsis?*

A. The *Gloria in excelsis* is a hymn—opening with the words sung by the angels on the first Christmas night—in praise of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

Q. *What is the origin of the Gloria in excelsis?*

A. It was originally a hymn or private psalm which was borrowed from the Greek liturgy and sung at the Morning Office, and which was introduced appropriately into the midnight Mass on Christmas night in the course of the 6th century.

Q. *What is the technical name of the Gloria in excelsis?*

A. It is called the major doxology (doxology meaning a formula of praise) in contrast with *Glory be to the Father*, etc., which is called the minor doxology.

Q. *Is the Gloria in excelsis said at every Mass?*

A. It is said only at festive Masses and, generally speaking, whenever the priest wears white, red or green vestments.

Q. *What is the Collect?*

A. The Collect is the prayer which the priest says before the Epistle in the name of all the faithful, and which the faithful offer up in union with him.

Q. *How is the word "Collect" accounted for?*

A. Before the "Station" procession started a prayer was said which was first known as the *Oratio ad plebem collectam, i.e.* "prayer at the assembly (or collection) of the people," but which afterwards, for the sake of brevity, came to be called the *Collecta*, the "Collect."

Q. *What second meaning is given to the term "Collect"?*

A. In the Collect, the priest, as it were, gathers up or collects the petitions of all the people and unites them with his own in one prayer.

Q. *How is the Collect constructed?*

A. The Collect consists of (1) *an invocation*; (2) *an expression of thanksgiving* for the mystery which is being celebrated, or for the glory or special grace conferred on the Saint whose Mass is being said; (3) *a petition* in which some grace or benefit is asked of God; (4) *an intercession* through Jesus Christ, and *a doxology* in honour of the Blessed Trinity.

Q. *What advantage is gained by uniting ourselves with the priest as he recites the Collect?*

A. Though the Collect is expressed in general terms and offered up on behalf of the whole Church, it can readily be adapted to each one's special need, and in this adaptation the individual prayer is raised to the highest plane. It is no longer a mere individual that prays, it is the Church—the Spouse of Christ—which intercedes for him or her.

Q. *What does St. Alphonsus say of the value of a prayer of the Mass?*

A. St. Alphonsus says that a prayer of the Mass is worth a hundred rosaries.

Q. *What prayers of the Mass correspond to the Collect?*

A. The Secret and the Post-Communion. Each Collect (or commemoration) has a Secret and a Post-Communion to correspond with it.

Q. *Do the Collects, apart from their use in the public worship of the Church, constitute prayers for private devotion?*

A. The Collects of the various Masses to be found in the Missal the Collects in the Masses of Our Divine

Lord, of Our Blessed Lady, of our favourite Saints, for instance, are the most beautiful prayers that can be addressed to them. The prayer of the Mass for the sick, for the grace of a happy death, for the remission of sin—to be found among the Votive Masses—cannot be surpassed, to say nothing of the many *Orationes Diversæ* for every need of the human soul, for every necessity of mankind. The prayers for a dead father or mother, brothers or sisters or relatives—to be found after the Dead Masses—are amongst the most appropriate we can offer up to God.

Q. *Is there more than one prayer at Mass?*

A. More often than not there are two or more prayers at Mass, a single prayer as a rule occurring only on the greater feasts.

Q. *What is the name given to these additional prayers?*

A. They are generally called commemorations, and when ordered by the Pope or bishop, they are called "ordered prayers," technically *orationes imperatæ*, e.g. prayers for peace or fine weather.

Q. *What are the Lessons?*

A. The "Lessons" or "*Lectiones*" is the name given to the extracts from the Scriptures that follow the Collect of the Mass.

Q. *How many Lessons are there in the Mass?*

A. Formerly there were three Lessons in the Mass—one from the Old Testament, a second from the New Testament, exclusive of the Gospels, and a third from the Gospels.

Q. *What is the object of the Lessons?*

A. The Lessons with the homily formed the instruction given to the Catechumens, and they are intended now to prepare the faithful for a worthy participation in the Sacrifice of the Mass, and to keep

them constantly reminded of the truths of the Faith derived from the Sacred Scriptures.

Q. *How many Lessons are there now?*

A. Except in a few instances (e.g. Wednesdays of Quarter Tense) there are only two Lessons now. The first is called the Epistle from the Sunday Lessons for the most part being taken from the Epistles of St. Paul, and the second, the Gospel, being an extract (or pericope) from the Evangelists.

Q. *What books are the Epistles taken from?*

A. From the Sapiential books of the Old Testament and the Acts of the Apostles, Epistles and Apocalypse of the New.

Q. *How is the Epistle concluded?*

A. At the end of the Epistle the server says *Deo gratias* to express on behalf of the faithful the gratitude felt at the instruction that has just been given.

Q. *How were the Lessons separated from one another?*

A. To avoid monotony the Lessons were separated by chants drawn from the Psalter.

Q. *What happened when the first of the three Lessons was dropped?*

A. The chants which served to separate the original three Lessons were joined together between the Epistle and the Gospel.

Q. *What was the name given to the first chant?*

A. It is called the Gradual from the Latin *gradus*, meaning a step, because it was sung by a soloist from the step (*i.e.*, the *gradus*) of the *ambo* (a kind of pulpit). It was usually sung by a deacon.

Q. *Is the Gradual a full psalm?*

A. The Gradual now consists of a response (R) and a single verse (V), because the elaborate music to which it came to be set would make the singing of a full psalm too long an interval.

Q. *Is the Gradual always taken from the Psalter?*

A. Occasionally the text of the Gradual is taken from other books of Sacred Scripture, and less often from ecclesiastical compositions.

Q. *What is the import of the Gradual?*

A. The Gradual often renews the sentiment of the Epistle, or reflects the characteristic thought of the feast.

Q. *How does the Gradual differ from the other chants of the Mass?*

A. It is the most elaborate of all the chants of the Mass. Again, the other chants were intended to accompany certain actions of the Mass—the Introit was sung during the procession, the Offertory while the faithful made their offerings, the *Communio* while Communion was being distributed. The Gradual, on the other hand, was an independent chant sung for its own sake.

Q. *What is the origin of the "Alleluia" verse?*

A. An Alleluia was added to the Gradual, as it is added to certain psalms in the Psalter, and from the first was independent of it. It was added at certain periods of the year, notably at Paschal time, for it is a chant preeminently expressive of joy. To this Alleluia was added a verse, the text of which, though mostly taken from the Psalter, is often taken from other books of the Bible, and even, as in the case of the Gradual, from ecclesiastical compositions.

Q. *What is the present structure of the "Alleluia" or Alleluiatic verse?*

A. It is in form a responsorial chant like the original form of the Gradual. The response (Alleluia) is sung and then repeated. The verse is sung and the response taken up again.

Q. *What change is effected in Paschal time?*

A. The Gradual is dropped except during Easter week, and in its stead there is the " Alleluia," consisting of two Alleluias and a verse, ending in a third Alleluia, followed by another verse ending in a fourth Alleluia.

Q. *What is the origin of the Tract?*

A. As the Alleluia was added to the Gradual on Sundays " throughout the year " and on Sundays in Advent and on feast days, it was thought proper after Septuagesima, when the Alleluia was dropped, to add, for the sake of symmetry, a penitential chant to replace the Alleluia. To this chant, which was originally a full psalm (as it is still on Palm Sunday), and is now only a portion of a psalm, was given the name *Tract.*

Q. *Why is it called a Tract?*

A. Because it was sung *in uno tractu, tractim,* that is, the psalm was sung " straight on " without being interrupted by a response as the Gradual and Alleluia were interrupted.

Q. *What is the Sequence?*

A. The Sequence is a hymn which is added on after the Gradual, Alleluia or Tract.

Q. *What is the origin of the Sequence?*

A. The name " Sequence " was first given to the long series of notes to which the last vowel (*a*) of the Gradual —Alleluia was sung. When words were put under the notes to help the memory of the singers, the name Sequence was given to the words, which in their turn, about the 9th century, developed into hymns of varying lengths.

Q. *What is another name for Sequence?*

A. The Sequence is also called a Prose, from the rhythmic prose, rather than measured verse, in which many of the Sequences were written.

Q. *How many Sequences still survive?*

A. Five Sequences are found in the Roman Missal :

Victimæ Paschali of Easter; *Veni Sancte Spiritus* of Pentecost; *Lauda Sion* of Corpus Christi; the *Stabat Mater* of the Mass of the Seven Dolours, and the *Dies Iræ* of the Mass of the Dead. They are some of the most remarkable compositions in the liturgy of the Church.

Q. *How is the special sacredness of the Gospel emphasised at Mass?*

A. The Missal is transferred from the left to the right, the side of honour. The priest prays at the centre of the altar that God may purify his heart and lips and send him a special blessing. When he stands before the Missal he makes signs of the Cross upon it and upon himself, and kisses the Missal when the Gospel is ended.

Q. *Do the faithful show special reverence too?*

A. The faithful stand up to declare their faith in Christ and their readiness to follow him wherever he leads, and make three signs of the Cross on the forehead, lips and breast, that Christ may be in their minds, on their lips, and in their hearts.

Q. *How is the holiness of the Gospel brought out at High Mass?*

A. The same honours are rendered to it as to the Blessed Sacrament. Lights surround it, and incense is offered up to it.

Q. *Why is there a ceremonial difference drawn between the inspired word of the Epistle and that of the Gospel?*

A. Because in the Epistle Christ speaks to us indirectly through his Prophets and Apostles; in the Gospel he speaks to us directly by his words and works.

Q. *Did the Lessons always occupy their present position?*

A. In the early ages of the Church, before the time of St. Patrick, the Mass began with a Lesson, as does to this day the Mass of the Presanctified on Good Friday.

Q. *What was the place of the sermon?*

A. The sermon was always preached after the Lessons.

Q. *What is the Nicene Creed?*

A. The Nicene Creed is a symbol of the faith. It contains a brief summary of Catholic dogma and serves as a profession of the common faith of the Church.

Q. *What is the meaning of the word "symbol" in this case?*

A. Symbol means a mark, token, or test by which anything may be recognised. The symbol of faith is, then, that test by which believers are distinguished from heretics or unbelievers.

Q. *When was the Nicene Creed drawn up?*

A. The Nicene Creed was composed in the 4th century to affirm the faith of the Council of Nicæa (325) against the Arians, who denied the divinity of Christ, and it was added to by the Council of Constantinople (381) to assert the divinity of the Holy Ghost, that was denied in the Macedonian heresy.

Q. *When was it introduced in the Mass?*

A. It was introduced in Rome in 1014, and is now regularly said on Sundays, on Feasts of Our Lord, of Our Lady, and of the Apostles, and on some other important feasts.

Q. *Why should we be eager to join with the priest in the recitation of the Nicene Creed on Sundays?*

A. Because in reciting the Creed we give utterance, article by article, to the teaching of Christ, to the belief of the Apostles, to the faith of the early Christians; because in it are condensed "the life, the continuity and the integrity of the Church's tradition." It should be dearer to us than any national anthem, "for it is the universal anthem of the Universal Church" (Verdunoy).

Chapter X

THE MASS OF THE FAITHFUL

Q. *Into what main parts may the Mass of the Faithful be divided?*

A. The Mass of the Faithful may be divided into two parts:—(*a*) from the end of the Gospel (or Credo) to the *Amen* before the *Pater Noster*, which is concerned with the offering up of the Sacrifice; (*b*) from the *Pater Noster* to the end which is concerned with the partaking of the Victim of the Sacrifice, that is, with the Holy Communion.

Q. *How may the first main section be divided?*

A. It may be divided into (*a*) the Offertory, (*b*) the Preface and Sanctus, (*c*) the Canon.

The Offertory

Q. *To what portion of the Mass is the name of the Offertory given?*

A. The Offertory begins with the mutual greeting of priest and people (*Dominus Vobiscum*), the general invitation to prayer, *Oremus* (let us pray), and ends with the prayer known as the Secret.

Q. *Does any prayer immediately follow upon the Oremus?*

A. Not now, but formerly, the Prayers of the Faithful followed on the lines of the prayers said or sung at the Mass of the Presanctified on Good Friday at the conclusion of that portion of the Passion which is said or sung as the Gospel of the day.

Q. *Is the Offertory of to-day different from the Offertory of former times?*

A. There is considerable difference in the prayers and actions, but no essential difference in fundamental idea.

Q. *Describe the Offertory of former times.*

A. The clergy, within the choir, and the laity, both men and women, outside the choir, made offerings of bread in small round cakes marked with a cross on top, and of wine in small bottles or cruets, which were presented to the deacons or other clergy, who placed upon the altar as much bread and wine as was necessary for all communicants.

Q. *What was done with what remained over?*

A. It was simply blessed, not consecrated, and given to non-communicants in sign of their union with their brethren.

Q. *Does this latter ceremony survive in any form?*

A. The ancient eulogia, as these blessed gifts are called, still survive in the blessed bread (*pain bénit*) which is blessed before Mass in several parts of France, and given to the non-communicants of the congregation and partaken of by them after the Communion of the Mass.

Q. *What other gifts did the faithful offer up?*

A. The faithful offered up candles, vases, incense, money, etc., for the upkeep of public worship and for the support of the clergy and of the poor.

Q. *What ceremony followed upon the celebrant's arranging the bread and wine for the Sacrifice upon the altar?*

A. The celebrant washed his hands, soiled by the handling of the bread, and read over the offerings a prayer which was called " The Prayer Over the Offerings (*Oratio super oblata*), and which now constitutes the Secret of the Mass.

Q. *What fundamental idea of the Mass did the offerings convey to the minds of the faithful?*

A. The idea of the faithful's active participation in the Sacrifice, for their gifts became the sacrificial gifts: it was their bread and wine that were changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Q. *Was the more material offering an all-sufficient proof of the active participation?*

A. The material offering served only as an outward manifestation of their inward desire to offer, to consecrate themselves to God, to unite the sacrifice of their will, of their life with the Sacrifice of Christ upon the altar.

Q. *When did the ancient ceremonial of the Offertory cease?*

A. It ceased about the 11th century, when unleavened bread was substituted for leavened bread, which was the bread in daily household use. In consequence of this change the clergy had to furnish the bread for the Sacrifice, the bread being in the form of the hosts with which we are now so familiar.

Q. *Are any survivals of the ancient offerings to be met with?*

A. At the Ordination service the candidates for Orders offer up lighted candles to the Bishop at the Offertory, and at the Consecration of a Bishop the Bishop-Elect presents two large loaves of bread, two diminutive barrels of wine, and two large candles to the Consecrating Bishop at the Offertory; again, the so-called funeral offerings which in some continental districts are placed upon the altar at the Offertory of the Mass for the Dead.

Q. *What now takes the place of the former offerings?*

A. The stipends which the faithful give for the celebration of Masses, and also, to a lesser degree, the

offerings made during the Offertory within the church or at the church door on entering the church.

Q. *Why are bread and wine chosen as the elements of the Sacrifice?*

A. Bread and wine are chosen by the command of Our Divine Lord, Who at the Last Supper constituted them the matter of the Blessed Eucharist.

Q. *What special fitness have bread and wine as elements of the Sacrifice?*

A. (1) Bread and wine are the commonest nourishment of mankind, and their availability almost everywhere makes for the unity of the Christian Sacrifice. (2) Bread and wine constitute the complete nourishment for man who requires food as well as drink to sustain life. Therefore in the bread and wine of the Sacrifice we offer up that which sustains life. We offer up, then, in symbol our life itself. (3) Bread and wine are the symbols of the Mystical Body of Christ. For as bread is made up of many grains of wheat, and wine is made up of many grapes, so the Mystical Body is made up of many members. The offerings of bread and wine symbolise, then, the offering up of the Mystical Body of Christ, of the faithful in union with Christ the Head (*cf.* Kramp).

Q. *In view of all this what should we do at the Offering of the Host and Chalice?*

A. We should offer up ourselves, consecrate ourselves at each Mass to God, unite the offerings of our prayers, our disposition, our will, our life with the infinite Sacrifice which Christ offers up to His Eternal Father upon the altar.

Q. *How may this offering of ourselves be most effectively done?*

A. By uniting ourselves with the priest. That union with the priest is normally and most readily achieved

by using the Missal, by following the actions of the priest, by making our own the prayers he recites, saying them in full or at least in summary or in paraphrase.

Q. *What is the origin of the Offertory piece which is usually called the Offertory simply?*

A. While the offerings were being presented by the clergy and faithful, a psalm with a refrain was sung by alternate choirs; but when the former long ceremony of offerings ceased, the psalm was replaced by the antiphon, which in full or in part served as the refrain, or by a single verse of the psalm, either of which as a rule echoes the characteristic note of the feast or of the liturgical season like the Introit and the Gradual. Like these, too, the Offertory varies each day.

Q. *Does any instance of the old form of Offertory survive?*

A. The old form survives in the Offertory of the Dead Mass, as may be seen from the repetition of the refrain *Quam olim Abrahæ*. Compare also the Offertory of the Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost.

Q. *What is the first Oblation prayer?*

A. In the first Oblation prayer (*Suscipe, Sancte Pater*, Receive, O Holy Father) the priest offers up the Host, that is, the bread, to the Eternal Father for his own sins, for all present, for all the faithful living and dead, and prays that it may be received to life everlasting. He then, having made the sign of the Cross with the paten over the corporal, places the offered Host upon that part of the corporal over which the sign of the Cross was made.

Q. *How is the offering of the wine effected?*

A. The priest goes to the Epistle side of the altar, pours wine into the chalice, then blesses the water and pours a few drops of the water into the chalice reciting a prayer the meanwhile.

Q. *Why does he bless the water and not the wine?*

A. The wine is considered as a symbol of the divinity and therefore needs no blessing ; the water is a symbol of human nature, and a blessing is appropriate.

Q. *What is the substance of the beautiful prayer the priest recites as he blesses the water and pours it into the chalice?*

A. He praises God for His wonderful benefits to mankind—the Creation, the Redemption—and prays that just as Jesus Christ took upon Himself our human nature, so by this mystery of the wine and water He may make mankind sharers in His Divinity. This is the *admirabile commercium* ("the admirable interchange") described in the Office of New Year's Day.

Q. *What does the mixture of the wine and water symbolise?*

A. (1) It symbolises the union of the divine and human nature in Christ. (2) It symbolises the union of Christ and the faithful, for wine symbolises Christ and water symbolises the people. Therefore, when the Chalice is offered up, the faithful represented by the water are offered up in union with Christ represented by the wine.

Q. *Why is the plural form used in offering up the Chalice and why does the deacon recite the prayer?*

A. The chalices were very heavy, containing as they did wine for all the faithful when communion under two species was the rule of the Church. The priest had to be assisted by the deacon (as he is by way of ceremony to this day at High Mass) in offering up the Chalice. The Oblation prayer was said by both, hence the plural number. It was the duty of the deacon when Holy Communion used to be given under two species to hand the chalice to the faithful.

Q. *What follows upon the offering up of the Chalice?*

A. The priest prays in his own name and in the name of the faithful for the spirit of humility and contrition, without which their joint oblation would not win them favour with God.

Q. *Why does the priest proceed to invoke the Holy Ghost?*

A. The Holy Ghost is invoked to bless the material offerings and moral dispositions of the priest and faithful, because, as it is to the Holy Ghost that the mystery of the Incarnation is attributed, to Him also is attributed the power of consecrating the Eucharist from the close analogy between the Eucharist and the Incarnation.

Q. *How is the holiness necessary for the Sacrifice further emphasised?*

A. The priest, in perpetuation of the old custom, washes his hands at the side of the altar. By this action and the psalm, the *Lavabo*, which he recites is signified the purity of heart with which the sacred mysteries should be approached.

Q. *What prayer does the priest recite on his return to the centre of the altar?*

A. He recites the *Suscipe, Sancta Trinitas* (Receive, O Holy Trinity), an additional oblation prayer, more recent than the others, in which the sacrifice is placed under the protection of the Church Triumphant, and is offered up in memory of the sufferings, victory and glorification of the Redeemer and in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of St. John the Baptist, of SS. Peter and Paul, and of the saints whose relics are in the altar (*istorum*, these), and of all the saints.

Q. *In what way does the priest identify the people with himself in offering up the Sacrifice?*

A. The priest turns round to face the people and bids them pray in the *Orate Fratres* in these terms: "Brethren pray that *my* sacrifice and *yours* may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty."

Q. *How is the "Orate Fratres" said?*

A. The first two words (*Orate Fratres*, Brethren, pray) are said in low tones by the priest as he looks towards the people. As he turns round towards the altar he finishes the prayer in a quiet voice; for what follows is a later addition and signifies simply the end and object of the people's prayer.

Q. *What answer do the people in the person of the server make?*

A. "May the Lord receive this Sacrifice from thy hands to the praise and glory of His own name, to our own benefit," etc.

Q. *What great truth does this response teach us?*

A. That the Sacrifice is directed first and foremost to the praise and glory of God. To offer God honour and glory is the supreme purpose of the Mass. Our personal needs are a secondary consideration in our offering up of the Holy Sacrifice, and are all the better served the more thoroughly we make God's glory the central motive of our Sacrifice.

Q. *The priest in inviting the faithful to pray speaks of the Sacrifice as "*MY *Sacrifice and* YOURS," *while in the response the server on behalf of the people speaks of the Sacrifice as the priest's simply, "May the Lord receive the Sacrifice from* THY *hands." How can the Sacrifice be at once the Sacrifice of both priest and people, and the Sacrifice of the priest alone?*

A. The one Eucharistic Sacrifice is at once the Sacrifice of Christ and the Sacrifice which the whole Church has to offer up to the Eternal Father. As the Sacrifice of the Church it is the Sacrifice of both priest and people. Both offer up the materials of the Sacrifice —the bread and wine, and with the bread and wine they offer up themselves. They both offer up the Body of Christ after the consecration, and offer up

themselves in union with the oblation of Christ's Body and Blood. In this sense the priest, in his capacity as representative of the Church, speaks of the Sacrifice being both his and the people's. But though both priest and the people participate in the offering up of the Sacrifice, they are far from participating in the same way and in the same degree. The priest alone, in his capacity as minister and instrument of Christ, has power to accomplish the sacrificial action. He alone is ordained to do as Christ did, to change, by the power of Christ, the Invisible High Priest, the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. In that sense the Sacrifice is peculiarly the priest's and not the people's.

Q. *What prayer does the priest say as soon as the response to the "Orates Fratres" is finished?*

A. He says the Secret, the ancient *Oratio super oblata* (the prayer over the offerings).

Q. *Why is it called the Secret?*

A. Because the priest says it in secret, that is in a very low voice, or as some suggest because it is said over the oblations, which are now *separated* from profane use (*secreta* being derived from *secernere*, to separate).

Q. *What is the ordinary petition of the Secret?*

A. The Secret, which corresponds with the Collect and Post-Communion, each collect or commemoration having a corresponding secret or post-communion, is usually a petition for the acceptance of the gifts offered up and for the sanctification of the offerers, e.g. :

"Receive, we beseech Thee, O Lord, our offerings and prayers, and both cleanse us by Thy heavenly mysteries and mercifully hear us." Frequently there is a reference to the mystery or feast that is being celebrated.

Chapter XI

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

A.—**THE PREFACE AND THE SANCTUS**

Q. *What follows upon the Secret?*

A. The Preface is joined to the conclusion of the Secret, and serves as an Introduction or Foreword to the Canon.

Q. *What do the Preface and Canon together form?*

A. They form the Eucharistic Prayer—sometimes called the *Anaphora*—during the course of which the sacrificial action takes place.

Q. *When did the two become distinct?*

A. During the course of the 8th century, when the practice of reciting the Canon in a low voice was introduced, the Preface being sung or recited aloud as always. This separation of the two was promoted by the fact that the Preface varied with the feast or season, while the Canon remained practically unchangeable.

Q. *How many Prefaces are there?*

A. There are 14 Prefaces, ten of which were in common use in the 7th century. The Preface of the Blessed Virgin Mary, composed on the occasion of the First Crusade, dates back to the end of the 11th century; the Prefaces of St. Joseph and of the Mass of the Dead were introduced by Pope Benedict XV in the April of 1919; the Preface for the Feast of Jesus Christ, King, was introduced by Pope Pius XI in 1925 with the establishment of the Feast itself.

Q. *Were the Prefaces more numerous in former times?*

A. At one period there was a proper Preface for practically every day in the year.

Q. *How may the Preface be described?*

A. The Preface, which is of Apostolic origin, is a hymn or prayer of thanksgiving and of praise—of great lyric beauty, set to incomparable melody, and designed and well fitted to prepare and exalt the mind for the sublime action of the Sacrifice that is about to be accomplished in the Canon of the Mass.

Q. *How does the liturgy bring out the value and the power of thanksgiving as the predominant note of Christian Prayer?*

A. Our Divine Lord at the Last Supper offered thanks to the Eternal Father before changing the bread and wine into His Body and Blood. The Mass is the giving of thanks to God (hence its ancient name, "action of thanksgiving," *actio gratiarum*); the name of the Blessed Sacrament is the Eucharist, which means thanksgiving; and so prominent was the note of thanksgiving in the early Christian assemblies, that their public prayer was called a thanksgiving and a praise.

Q. *How have the need and efficacy of thanksgiving been strikingly re-enforced?*

A. By the revelations of St. Margaret Mary when Our Divine Lord revealed to her His Sacred Heart that men might be moved to gratitude for the love He bore them.

Q. *When does our thanksgiving make the most direct appeal to God?*

A. When we unite our feeble thanks to the infinite thanksgiving of Jesus upon the altar.

Q. *How may the Preface be divided?*

A. The Preface may be divided into three parts—Introduction, Thanksgiving and Praise.

Q. *Of what does the Introduction consist?*

A. The Introduction consists of versicles and responses in which the priest greets the people and bids them lift up their hearts to God on high in view of the coming consecration, drive worldly thoughts out of their minds, and join with him in offering thanks to the Lord our God.

Q. *What form does the Thanksgiving take?*

A. Thanksgiving is offered to the Eternal Father through our heavenly mediator, Jesus Christ, for all the benefits conferred upon mankind, which are, as it were, summed up in the Holy Sacrifice, with special reference to the motive of thanksgiving proper to the feast or to the season of the year.

Q. *What special observations are to be made regarding two of the Prefaces?*

A. In the Preface of the Apostles thanks is offered directly to Jesus Christ; in the Common Preface, though no motive of thanksgiving is expressed, the mediation of Jesus Christ is most clearly brought out.

Q. *How is Praise expressed?*

A. We, sinners, unworthy of ourselves to offer praise to God, ask to be associated with the choirs of Angels, who, through Jesus Christ, praise the Eternal Father and ask to be united with them in saying the angelic or seraphic hymn of praise, *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.*

Q. *When was the Sanctus introduced into the Mass?*

A. The insertion of the Sanctus between the Preface and the Canon is attributed to Pope St. Sixtus († 127).

Q. *Of what elements is the Sanctus composed?*

A. The opening words are taken from the Prophet Isaias; the *Hosanna in excelsis* and the *Benedictus* are the acclamations with which the Jewish people greeted Our Divine Lord as He entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

Q. *What feelings are expressed in the gestures of the celebrant as he recites the Sanctus?*

A. He bows down at the words *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,* to express the interior act of total submission to God, and he stands erect for the *Benedictus* to greet the coming Saviour and makes the sign of the Cross to signify that the Sacrifice of the altar which is now about to be accomplished is the same as the Sacrifice of the Cross.

Chapter XII

B.—THE CANON OF THE MASS

Q. *What follows upon the Sanctus?*

A. The *Sanctus* is followed by the Canon, the most sublime prayer of all liturgy.

Q. *How did the introduction of the Sanctus after the Preface affect the character of the Canon?*

A. The Canon lost its character as a thanksgiving prayer and became a prayer of petition.

Q. *Account for the name "Canon"?*

A. The word Canon is from a Greek word, meaning rule or measure or standard, and hence the Canon of the Mass is the invariable rule to be followed in offering up the holy Sacrifice.

Q. *What other names have been applied to the Canon?*

A. It was called *actio* (either a shortened form of *Gratiarum actio*, thanksgiving, or a derivative of *Agere* = to sacrifice), *prex, prex canonica* or *oratio* (the prayer *par excellence*).

Q. *What portion of the Mass does it include?*

A. The Canon begins with the *Te igitur* (Wherefore, etc.) and ends with the *Amen* that precedes the *Pater Noster*.

Q. *What do you know of the composition of the Canon?*

A. The Canon, says the Council of Trent, is made up of the words of Our Lord, of the tradition of the Apostles, and of the pious ordinances of the Popes. St. Gregory the Great states that it was arranged in its present form by a certain Scholasticus (a scholar or a learned man).

Q. *Does it bear signs of a very careful arrangement of its parts?*

A. It is most symmetrically arranged—e.g. it begins with three signs of the Cross, towards the close before the Doxology there are three also; five signs of the Cross immediately precede the Consecration, five more signs immediately follow it; the words of the Consecration are in the very centre of the Canon; the Memento of the Living precedes the Consecration, and at an equal distance after the Consecration follows the Memento of the Dead.

Q. *What is the date of the Canon?*

A. In its complete form our present Canon dates from the 7th century.

Q. *What are the dates of its constituent parts?*

A. It is generally agreed that the oldest parts of the Canon are the prayers in which petition is made for the acceptance and blessing of the gifts. This is particularly true of the prayers from the *Quam oblationem* to the *Supplices* inclusive.

Q. *What is known of the original arrangement of the parts?*

A. This is a much disputed question, but it is generally held that the Commemorations of the Living and of the Dead were placed together when first introduced into the Canon of the Mass.

Q. *What is the object of the picture, generally of the Crucifixion, which is placed in the Missal immediately before the Canon?*

A. To remind the priest that the Sacrifice he is about to offer is the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross.

Q. *What is the origin of the picture?*

A. It arose out of the elaborate ornamentation of the T, the opening letter of the Canon—*Te igitur*—which gradually developed into the figure of Our Lord

hanging upon a cross—the cross on which Our Lord died being most probably a T-shaped cross.

Q. *Why is the Canon said in a low voice?*

A. To inspire and to foster in the faithful the reverence due to the sacred mysteries and to emphasise the great dogmatic truth that the Canon is an action which is performed solely by the priest. During it the people are to engage merely in silent prayer in union with the priest, but at the close of it they give their assent to all that has been done by saying *Amen*.

Q. *How may the Canon be divided?*

A. Into three groups of prayers, viz. :—

1. Those which precede the Consecration.
2. The words of Consecration.
3. The prayers which follow the Consecration.

1.—The Prayers of the Canon before the Consecration

Q. *What are the prayers that precede the Consecration?*

A. Five prayers precede the Consecration, viz. :—the *Te igitur*, the *Memento*, the *Communicantes* (which may, all three, be regarded as forming one prayer), the *Hanc igitur*, and the *Quam oblationem*, to name them by the opening words of the Latin text.

Q. *Give a brief summary of the first three prayers of the Canon.*

A. In the first, petition is made for the acceptance and blessing of the sacrificial gifts that they may bring blessings upon the whole Church ; in the second, petition is made for blessings on the congregation and other special members of the faithful, while in the third (the *Communicantes*) the aid of the Church triumphant is enlisted to enforce both these petitions.

Q. *What is the force of the word "igitur" (wherefore) that occurs at the beginning of the opening prayer?*

A. It connects the Canon with the Preface and the logical relation may be thus expressed: Since (in the Preface) we offer up praise and thanksgiving to the Father through Jesus Christ, so therefore (in the Canon) we offer up our petitions to the Father through Jesus Christ.

Q. *Is any other explanation offered?*

A. Others connect the *Te igitur* prayer directly with the *Sanctus* and express the logical relation thus:— Because God is holy (*sanctus*) only holy gifts can be offered to Him, therefore (*igitur*) may He bless, that is, make holy the gifts that lie upon the altar (the bread and wine of the Sacrifice).

Q. *What is the content of the "Te igitur," the first prayer?*

A. The priest in the name of the faithful prays that God may bless the sacrificial gifts, that this blessing may fall upon:—

(*a*) the whole Church, and bring it peace, unity and divine guidance;

(*b*) the heads of the Church—viz., the Pope, the centre of Catholic unity, and upon the bishop to whom has been entrusted the spiritual charge of the smaller unit, part of the whole, called the diocese;

(*c*) the promoters of the faith and the faithful in general.

Q. *What lesson does this prayer teach us?*

A. That in Holy Mass we should in the spirit of liturgical prayer rise above the close confine of egotism and our personal needs and have the interests of the whole Church at heart. Thereby we most effectually promote the glory of God and our own sanctification.

Q. *What is the second prayer (the Memento) called?*

A. It has for title the "Commemoration of the Living," and replaces an older prayer called the *Oratio super diptycha*, the "Prayer over the Diptychs."

Q. *What is the meaning of the word "diptychs"?*

A. Diptychs (from a word meaning to bend twice) consisted of two tablets (sometimes of ivory) so fastened together by a string or strap as to open and close like a book, on one section of which were written the names of the chief ecclesiastical patrons and benefactors of the Church, of the more generous donors of the gifts at the Offertory, of saints held in special devotion, and upon the other section were written the names of the dead on whose behalf offerings had been made, or who had claims on the special regard of the local church.

Q. *Describe the ceremony of reading the diptychs.*

A. The deacon read them from the ambo (or pulpit), or the sub-deacon from the foot of the altar at High Mass [at Low Mass the celebrant read them out from the predella of the altar]. When the reading was concluded the celebrant resumed the reading of the Canon at the words *quorum Tibi fides cognita est etc*, (whose faith and devotion are known to Thee).

Q. *How long did this custom survive?*

A. It lasted till the 11th or 12th century, after which the diptychs were simply placed upon the altar without being read out; subsequently the use of the diptychs was abandoned entirely, the letters *N. N.* of the *Memento*, both of the Living and of the Dead, taking their place; but it may be said that the altar notices of the dead and the reading of the list of subscribers to Church funds fulfil, to some extent, the function of the diptychs.

Q. *For whom does the priest pray at the Memento?*

A. Amongst others he prays for those whom he

marks out himself and for all present whose *faith and devotion are known to God.*

Q. *What is the force of the clause "quibus Tibi offerimus" (for whom we offer to Thee)?*

A. This clause was introduced when the faithful ceased to make offerings at the Mass, and implies that these offerings are now made by the priest on behalf of the faithful, the active participation of the faithful being still insisted on.

Q. *Explain the clause "qui Tibi offerunt" (who offer to Thee)?*

A. This clause refers to the benefactors who established foundation Masses, that is, who left money for Masses to be said in perpetuity for their intentions, and may with equal truth apply to those who give stipends for Masses.

Q. *What are the intentions expressed in this prayer?*

A. The sacrifice of praise is offered up for those of whom special mention has been made, for the congregation, etc., and for their relations and friends to promote the welfare of their souls and the health of their bodies.

Q. *What is understood by the clause "Tibique reddant vota" (and do now pay their vows to Thee)?*

A. This clause, which is connected by the enclitic (*que*—the conjunction "and"), with the preceding *qui Tibi offerunt* (who offer to Thee), asserts once more that those who assist at Holy Mass offer up themselves—their sorrows, their temptations, their joys, their will, their life—to God in sacrifice in union with the sacrifice of Christ—the word *vota* being identical with *sacrificia* (sacrifices).

Q. *How is the third prayer of the Canon introduced?*

A. By the phrase *infra* (for *intra*) *actionem*, that is, "within the action or Canon."

Q. *Account for the expression.*

A. The third prayer, the *Communicantes*, varied frequently and still varies. The phrase "*infra* (for *intra*) *actionem*" (within the Canon) was introduced to remind the celebrant that at this point the *Communicantes* proper to the day was to be introduced.

Q. *Does it serve that purpose still?*

A. It does, for at present there are seven variants of the *Communicantes*—viz., at Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost (and during their octaves), and on Holy Thursday and Holy Saturday—the proper *Communicantes* being found immediately after the Preface proper to the day.

Q. *What meaning is attached to the word "Communicantes"?*

A. It means those who are in the one communion, members of the one Church.

Q. *How is the grammatical construction of the word "Communicantes" accounted for?*

A. Some writers hold that as the "Memento," being of later introduction than the *Te igitur* and the *Communicantes*, was inserted between them by way of parenthesis, the present participle *Communicantes* refers to the plural pronoun "we" contained in the *petimus*, *rogamus* and *offerimus* of the *Te igitur*, and would paraphrase it thus: "we . . . who are in the communion of the one Church also (*et*) reverence the memory, first, of the glorious Mary, etc."

Q. *What other explanation may be offered?*

A. Others suggest that the participle, "*Communicantes*," refers rather to what immediately precedes and serves as a link between the two diptychs (list of benefactors and list of saints). We have first the diptych of the Church militant, "*Memento, Domine*" (Be mindful, O Lord). Then we pass on to the diptych of

the Church triumphant by a word of transition which may be thus paraphrased: "Remaining in this truly Catholic union which we have just established by the preceding Memento, let us unite ourselves also to our brethren in Heaven."

Q. *What is the substance of this prayer?*

A. It is an invocation of the blessed in Heaven to second our petitions.

Q. *Who are the blessed in Heaven who are invoked?*

A. The Blessed Virgin, twelve Apostles and twelve martyrs, including five Popes, one bishop, one deacon, and five laymen.

Q. *Account for the names invoked.*

A. The Blessed Virgin—the greatest saint of the Church—heads the list, and is invoked as the glorious Mary ever a virgin, Mother of God and of Our Lord Jesus Christ: titles to express her greatness, her power and her dignity.

The Apostles mentioned are those chosen personally by Jesus to continue His work and propagate His Kingdom, hence the inclusion of St. Paul and the omission of St. Matthias.

The Martyrs invoked are those who were most honoured in Rome in the 5th and 6th centuries—confessors not being at that time honoured in the Church's liturgy:

Linus (+79), first successor of St. Peter. Feast on 23rd Sept.

Cletus (or Anacletus) (+90), succeeded St. Linus as Pope. Feast on 26th April as Cletus, and on 13th July as Anacletus.

Clement (+99), an Apostolic Father, succeeded Cletus; is mentioned by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Philippians (*c.* iv. *v.* 3). Feast, 23rd Nov.

Xystus [*i.e.*, Pope Sixtus II (+258)], the Sixtus who is met with in Raphael's Sixtine Madonna. Feast, 6th Aug.

Cornelius, Pope (+253), martyred on the same date of the same month as St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (+258). Hence they have a common feast—16th Sept. St. Cyprian was held in high honour in Rome.

Lawrence (+258), was ordained Deacon by Pope St. Sixtus II, and is said to have been roasted on a gridiron. He was especially beloved of the Romans. He is the patron of the poor and of cooks. Feast, 10th August.

Q. *Give a brief account of the five laymen.*

A. Chrysogonus (+304), reputed to have been tutor and adviser of St. Anastasia. Feast, 24th Nov.

John and Paul, brothers, were both dignitaries of the Imperial Court; put to death (+362) by Julian the Apostate; patrons against storm and pestilence. Feast, 26th June.

Cosmas and Damian (+297), twin brothers, born in Arabia; practised as physicians at the seaport of Aegæ (Ayass). They earned for themselves the name "Silverless," because they attended the poor free of charge. They are the patron saints of dentists, doctors and barbers. Feast, 27th September.

Q. *Account for the "igitur" (therefore) in the next prayer (Hanc igitur).*

A. The recommendation of the offerings and of the offerers, interrupted by the *Communicantes*, is now resumed and the word *igitur* (therefore) connects the *Hanc igitur* with the 1st and 2nd prayers of the Canon.

Q. *Why does the priest spread his hands over the offerings during the recitation of this fourth prayer?*

A. To emphasise the sacrificial character of the

Mass. As it was the custom in the Old Law for the priest to place his hands on the victim that was offered up in sacrifice, so in the Mass the priest spreads his hands over the bread and wine to denote that Christ sacrifices Himself as a victim on the altar in our stead, for us and for our sins.

Q. *When was the imposition of hands introduced?*

A. In the beginning of the 16th century when the sacrificial nature of the Mass was denied by the Protestant Reformers.

Q. *What is understood by the phrases "servitutis nostræ" (our servitude) and "cunctæ familiæ Tuæ" (Thy whole household)?*

A. They emphasise the fact that the one Eucharistic Sacrifice, besides being the Sacrifice of Christ, is also the Sacrifice of the whole Church, which is offered up by all its members and for all its members in union with the Sacrifice of Christ—the words *servitutis nostræ* (our servitude) being understood to refer to the celebrant (or rather to the special servants of God in general, that is, the clergy), while the words *cunctæ familiæ Tuæ* (Thy whole household) are regarded as referring to the congregation (or rather to the whole Church). Compare with the opening words of the Anamnesis, p. 127.

Q. *Who is responsible for the present form of this prayer?*

A. St. Gregory the Great, at a time when Italy was overrun by hostile armies, added the words *diesque nostros in Tua pace* (order our days in Thy peace) to the end *gregi numerari* ("to be numbered among the flock of Thy elect").

Q. *What is the nature of the peace demanded?*

A. Temporal peace together with that peace of soul which will result in saving us from eternal damnation,

the greatest of all evils, and in bringing us into the fold of the elect, the greatest of all blessings.

Q. *Does the "Hanc igitur" vary?*

A. It varies three times a year—at Easter and at Pentecost (and during their octaves) to recommend the recently baptised to God, and on Holy Thursday to thank God for the gift of the Holy Eucharist; it is also varied at the Mass at which a bishop is consecrated. And hence it is that some writers hold that the *Hanc igitur* was originally inserted to express the particular intention for which the Mass was offered up.

Q. *What is the next prayer of the Canon?*

A. The next prayer of the Canon is the *Quam oblationem* (This our offering), which continues the offering of the material gifts and serves as a transition and an introduction to the words of Consecration.

Q. *What gestures mark the recitation of this prayer?*

A. The priest makes three signs of the Cross over the offerings as a whole and then a sign of the Cross over the bread that is to become the holy bread of life everlasting, and over the wine that is to become the Blood of the Lord.

Q. *What is the meaning of the five epithets qualifying the offering in this prayer?*

in omnibus . . . benedictam = unreservedly blessed.

adscriptam = legitimate, carried out according to primitive institution (or consecrated by God).

ratam = valid.

rationabilem = spiritual, not like the irrational victims of the Old Law.

acceptabilem = acceptable, on account of the possession of the four preceding qualities.

Q. *What then is the substance of this prayer?*

A. The priest prays that God may unreservedly bless our material offering (of bread and wine), that it may

be legitimate and valid before Him [or that it may be consecrated by and be valid before Him], that it may be spiritual, that it may be acceptable to Him, and so may become for us the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.*

Q. *What interpretation is given to this last clause, "and so become for us the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ?"*

A. We ask through the priest that the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, always in Heaven, may by the words of consecration lie upon the altar and become our sacrifice and our food.

Q. *What is a prayer for the consecration of the bread and wine called?*

A. It is called epiklesis (*v.*, p. 131, where the prayer is discussed).

2.—The Words of Consecration

Q. *What are the sources from which the words of the actual consecration are derived?*

A. The words of consecration are taken from the words of Our Lord in instituting the Eucharist (as found in the Synoptic Gospels and in St. Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians) and from apostolic tradition.

Q. *What in the main is the purport of the words of apostolic tradition?*

A. To describe the gestures and actions of Our Divine Lord during the actual institution.

* St. Thomas Aquinas explains this difficult prayer thus:—"Vouchsafe to make this oblation blessed (*benedictam*), *i.e.*, that we may receive a blessing, namely, through grace; *adscriptam*, that we may be 'enrolled' in heaven; *ratam*, 'ratified,' that we may be incorporated in Christ; *rationabilem*, that we may be stripped of our animal sense; *acceptabilem* (qui), that we who in ourselves are displeasing, may, by this oblation, be made acceptable to His only Son" (*Summa Theologica*, P. III, Q. 83, Art. 4).

Q. *Enumerate the phrases from apostolic tradition?*

A. (*a*) *in sanctas ac venerabiles manus suas* (into His holy and venerable hands). Those words occur twice.

(*b*) *elevatis oculis* . . . omnipotentem (and with his eyes lifted up on).

(*c*) (hunc) *præclarum* (calicem) [(this) *excellent* (chalice)]—this epithet added out of reverence for the sacred mysteries.

(*d*) *et æterni* (and eternal).

(*e*) *mysterium fidei* (mystery of faith)—in parenthesis.

Q. *What is the explanation of the words "mysterium fidei"?*

A. These words, borrowed from St. Paul (I Tim. iii. 9), were used by the deacon in announcing the solemn moment of the Consecration to the people at a time when the practice prevailed of shutting the people out of the view of the altar from the beginning of the Canon to the Communion, a practice that still prevails in the Greek Church.

Q. *How did the words find their way into the form of consecration?*

A. At a Low Mass the priest himself spoke those words, which, by a natural development of their long-standing use, came to be inserted in a parenthesis in the form of the consecration, when the necessity of the previous formal announcement no longer prevailed.

Q. *What is to be remarked of the priest while he recites the words of consecration?*

A. The person of the priest recedes into the background. He takes the place of Christ (speaks and acts in the person of Christ). It is Christ who, through the instrumentality of the priest, says the words "This is My Body." It is Christ, the invisible High Priest, who

offers Himself up in sacrifice by the hands and by the lips of the visible priest.

Q. *What is understood by the expression "Hic est calix sanguinis mei" (This is the chalice of My Blood)?*

A. It is equivalent to saying: "This is My Blood contained in this Chalice."

Q. *What is conveyed in the words "Haec quotiescumque" (as often as you shall do these things)?*

A. These are the words in which Our Divine Lord instituted the Christian priesthood and established the ever-during Sacrifice of the New Testament as a memorial of His sufferings and of His death by means of which mankind was redeemed.

Q. *Why is the little bell (called the sanctus bell) rung before and during the Consecration?*

A. To warn the congregation, in the first instance, of the approach of the most solemn moments of the Mass, and then to signal to them that the actual Consecration has taken place and to invite their adoration of Jesus upon the altar.

Q. *What is the history of the elevation of the Sacred Host and Chalice?*

A. Up to the beginning of the 13th century the only elevation of the Sacred Host and Chalice that took place was the so-called "little elevation" at the end of the Canon at the words "*omnis honor et gloria*" ("all honour and glory").

Q. *When was the present elevation of the Sacred Host at the Consecration introduced?*

A. It was introduced first into the diocese of Paris in the first years of the 13th century, and the practice spread so quickly throughout the Western Church that Pope Honorius III, in a letter addressed to the Irish Bishops in 1219, instructed them to have this ceremonial practice observed throughout their dioceses.

Q. *What is origin of the practice?*

A. Towards the last quarter of the 12th century certain theologians of the famous University of Paris held that the Host was not consecrated until the form of the consecration of the wine had been completed. The then Bishop of Paris, Eudes de Sully, to show his strong objection to this new theory, ordered the priests of his diocese to raise up the Sacred Host in view of the people for their adoration immediately after the words of consecration had been pronounced over the Host.

Q. *Does the Church still desire the faithful to look at the Sacred Host raised aloft in the priest's hands?*

A. So desirous is the Church to encourage this practice amongst the faithful, that Pope Pius X, of saintly memory, granted an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines to all the faithful who at the moment of the elevation (or during the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament) look at the Sacred Host with faith, devotion and love, and, moreover, those who make this their daily practice and add the invocation "My Lord and my God," may gain a plenary indulgence once a week under the usual conditions (Rescript, 18th May, 1907).

Q. *When was the elevation of the chalice introduced?*

A. This was of later introduction. It is first met with in the year 1311, and was not imposed as a general law until the latter end of the 16th century.

3.—The Prayers of the Canon after the Consecration

Q. *What is the nature of the first three prayers that follow the Canon?*

A. The prayers that follow the Canon are, like those that precede it, prayers of oblation with the difference

that, in the first set of prayers, it is the material offerings of bread and wine that are presented to God, while in the oblation prayers after the Consecration, it is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ that are offered up.

Q. *What is the substance of the first three prayers that follow the Consecration?*

A. In the first prayer (*Unde et memores*) the Church, mindful of Christ, offers to the Eternal Father the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, now present upon the altar; in the second (*Supra quæ*) it prays that God the Father may look upon the oblation or sacrifice with propitious glance, and in the third (*Supplices*) it prays that the Angel of God may bear the oblation to the altar on high, so that, in return, there may descend from that same Heavenly altar rich blessings and graces upon all who participate in the Altar—that is, upon all who in Holy Communion partake of the Victim that has been offered up in Sacrifice.

Q. *What is the first of these three prayers called?*

A. The first of these three prayers is called the *Anamnesis* (from the Greek words *ana*, again, and *mnesis*, memory), because in this prayer the Church in obedience to the formal command of Our Divine Lord—"do this in commemoration of Me"—commemorates Christ and His Mysteries—the Passion (called blessed on account of the benefits it has conferred on mankind), the joyous Resurrection and the glorious Ascension.

Q. *Explain the term "nos servi Tui" (we, Thy servants)?*

A. These words apply to the celebrant; the plural form being a relic of the time when priests said Mass together, concelebrated, e.g. with the bishop, as the new priests do on the occasion of their ordination, or as a new bishop concelebrates with his consecrating bishop.

Q. *Explain the next phrase, "plebs Tua sancta" (Thy holy people).*

A. It means "Thy people called to holiness." All Christians participate in a very wide sense in the priesthood of Christ through the character impressed on the soul in Baptism. Hence the faithful (Thy holy people) in union with the celebrant, though in a far inferior capacity, are empowered to join in offering up the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ—a gift of God, a clean, a holy and a spotless victim.

Q. *What does the pronoun in the opening words of the next prayer (the Supra quæ—*upon *them) refer to ?*

A. It refers to the Body and Blood of Christ which are present upon the altar and which have just been mentioned in the preceding prayer.

Q. *Why is it deemed necessary to ask God the Father to look upon the oblation of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ with favour?*

A. Hearkening back to the explanation given of the wording of the *Orate Fratres* and its response, we will recall that the Eucharistic Sacrifice has a twofold aspect. In one aspect it is the Sacrifice of Christ, in the other it is the Sacrifice which the Church offers up to the Eternal Father uniting the offering of itself with the offering of Jesus Christ the Victim of infinite worth.

In and for itself the Sacrifice of Christ is absolutely pleasing to God, but in so far as it is our Sacrifice as members of the Church it is pleasing to God, and therefore fruitful for us in the degree of holiness we possess (*cf.*, the oblation prayer *In spiritu humilitatis*, etc. In an humble spirit, etc.). Sensible of our unworthiness we pray God that He may look down with mercy upon us and upon the oblation presented to Him by our sin-stained hands, the acceptableness of a gift being

determined not merely by the nature of the gift, but also by the dispositions of the offerers of the gift.*

Q. *What dispositions should we have?*

A. The dispositions of Abel, Abraham and Melchisedech as they offered up sacrifice to God.

Q. *Why are these three names singled out?*

A. The sacrifices of Abel and of Abraham are types of the sacrifice of the Cross, while the sacrifice of Melchisedech is typical of the Sacrifice of the Altar—and, moreover, their three sacrifices are distinctly mentioned in Holy Scripture as being accepted by God.

Q. *To whom do we owe the present form of the "Supra quae"?*

A. To Pope St. Leo I, who added the words *sanctum sacrificium, immaculatam hostiam*, by way of condemnation of the Manichean heresy.

Q. *What is the significance of the gestures that accompany the third prayer ("Supplices")?*

A. The priest bows down before God in humble supplication, kisses the altar to unite himself in love and reverence with the Sacrifice of the Altar. He then rises and makes the sign of the Cross over the Sacred Host and Chalice to show that through the Sacrifice of the Cross they become the source of blessings. He makes the sign of the Cross upon himself to express the desire that the blessings of the altar should overflow upon himself and upon the faithful.

* St. Thomas Aquinas explains the prayer in this way:—"Although this sacrament in itself is to be preferred before all former sacrifices, yet the sacrifices of the men of old were most acceptable to God on account of the devotion with which they were offered. Consequently the priest prays that this Sacrifice (of the Body and Blood of Christ) be accepted by God on account of the devotion of those who offer it just as the sacrifices of old were accepted by Him" (*Summa Theologica*, P. III, Q. 83., Art. 4).

Q. *Who is the holy Angel mentioned in this third prayer?*

A. This invocation of the holy Angel is suggested by the Apocalypse (viii. 3–5), where an angel is represented as offering up all the prayers of the saints on the altar of God which is before the throne. No angel in particular is referred to. It is simply implied that it is by the ministry of an angel (or of the angels) that our prayers are brought up to heaven.

Q. *What other opinions are held as to this holy angel?*

A. It is considered by various authorities that the holy Angel is Jesus Christ, or the Holy Ghost, or St. Michael the Archangel, the guardian of the Church, or the Angel of Prayer mentioned by Tertullian or the Guardian Angel of the celebrant of the Mass.

Q. *Paraphrase this prayer beginning with "Supplices."*

A. May the Angel of God carry our oblation of the Body and Blood of Christ to the altar on high [which is God in Heaven] so that God [having our oblation always, as it were, before His eyes, and thereby being more ready to listen to our prayers] may vouchsafe to fill with every blessing and grace those of us who will partake of the Victim offered up in Sacrifice—that is, those of us who will in Holy Communion receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Q. *What important truth is affirmed in the latter portion of this prayer?*

A. That from the point of view of the Church's liturgy Holy Communion is a partaking of the Victim offered up in Sacrifice, and therefore, it naturally follows that, apart from exceptional circumstances, the proper time to receive Holy Communion is, as in the case of the priest, within the Mass, and that, when Communion is received outside the Mass its relation to the Holy Sacrifice should be always borne in mind.

Q. *What well known form of prayer does the "Supplices" take the place of?*

A. The *Supplices* occupies the place of the *Epiklesis.*

Q. *What is the Epiklesis?*

A. The *Epiklesis* (a Greek word, meaning invocation) is a prayer generally directed to the Holy Ghost for the consecration of the bread and wine and for the fruits of Holy Communion.

Q. *Was there ever an Epiklesis in the Roman liturgy?*

A. Most probably there was in the time of Pope Gelasius I, but there is no certainty that an *Epiklesis* existed in that particular form of the Canon—(there were probably different forms at one time in use)—from which the present Canon has developed.

Q. *Are there any prayers in the present Canon which fulfil the purpose of the Epiklesis?**

A. The *Quam oblationem* petitions for the consecration of the bread and wine while the *Supplices* petitions for the fruits of Holy Communion, both prayers being directed to God the Father.

Q. *Account for the "etiam" (also) in the "Memento" of the Dead?*

A. Originally the reading out of the names of the dead to be prayed for followed immediately upon the reading out of the names of the living, and was therefore

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* De La Taille in his monumental work, *Mysterium Fidei*, holds that the *Supplices* is a true epiklesis directed to the Word of God, that the "holy angel" designates Christ Our Lord, and that the "altar on high" is "the Body of Christ."

"When we pray," he writes, "that the oblation be borne to the altar of God on high we ask that by the consecration the bread be changed into the Body of Christ; when we pray for sanctification through our participation of the altar (*ex hac altaris participatione*) we ask that from that same heavenly altar holiness may descend upon us through the sacred banquet." *Elucidatio XXI, Epilogus II*, p. 282. Edition 1921).

introduced with the word *Memento etiam* (Be mindful also).

Q. *What special dead are prayed for?*

A. Those who die in the faith (*cum signo fidei*) and at peace with the Church (*in somno pacis*, in the sleep of peace, that is, not under the ban of the Church).

Q. *What is significant in the bowing of the head that accompanies the concluding words of this "Memento"?*

A. It is the only place where the priest must bow at the word Christ (*Christum*) unaccompanied by the Holy Name.

Q. *How is this rubric accounted for?*

A. By the mediæval custom of the celebrant's signalling to the attendant clergy to bow their heads at the words *Nobis quoque peccatoribus* (to us also sinners), the opening words of the succeeding prayer.

Q. *What is the symbolic purport of this bowing of the head?*

A. It recalls the fact that Jesus having bowed His head upon the Cross descended into Limbo to comfort the dead that were awaiting their entrance into Heaven.

Q. *How is the prayer, "Nobis quoque peccatoribus," connected in thought with the "Memento" of the Dead?*

A. The celebrant requests for himself and for the faithful that which he has requested for the dead and that which saints have already attained—viz., the happiness of Heaven.

Q. *What is of special remark regarding the opening words of this prayer?*

A. They are the only words that are said aloud in the body of the Canon; for they constitute a call for the faithful's inner participation in the sorrowful confession of sinfulness which the priest utters on behalf of all and which he enforces by the gesture of striking his breast.

Q. *What distinction is made between "partem aliquam" (some part) and "societatem" (fellowship)*

A. *Aliquam partem* (some part) helps to remind us that our share of glory and blessedness will be in proportion to the talents given us and the merits acquired by us.

Societatem (fellowship) consists, it has been said, in that mysterious union of souls by means of which each man partakes of that in another, which he could not possess by his own merits, while he rejoices over another's blessedness as he rejoices over his own (*cf.* Schüch-Polz).

Q. *What Saints are mentioned in this prayer?*

A. To strengthen the effectiveness of our appeal to the Divine mercy the names of fifteen martyrs are mentioned who have already gained what we ask for. The martyrs invoked are :—

John (most probably St. John the Baptist, who was the greatest saint of the Old Testament and who heads the list). His feast as martyr falls on 29th August, the feast of his Nativity on 24th June.

Seven men and seven women (corresponding to the twelve apostles and the twelve martyrs of the "*Communicantes*").

Stephen, the proto-martyr, one of the first seven deacons, stoned to death. Feast, 26th December.

Matthias, apostle elected in the place of Judas. His feast falls on 24th February, but in a leap year on the 25th.

Barnabas (originally Joseph), the Apostle of Cyprus, was a companion of St. Paul and was consecrated bishop with him. Feast on 11th June.

Ignatius of Antioch, said to be the child on whom Our Divine Lord laid his hand in blessing, second successor of St. Peter in the Chair of Antioch. Feast on 1st February.

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Alexander I, fifth Pope after St. Peter (115). Feast, 3rd May. He ordered that water should be mixed with wine at the Mass and that water should be blessed for the faithful.

Marcellinus, a priest, and Peter, an exorcist of the Roman Church, martyred near Rome in the first years of the 4th century. Feast, 2nd June.

Felicitas, a slave, and Perpetua, a woman of noble birth, were married women of Carthage, who were beheaded in 202. Feast, 7th March.

Agatha of Palermo or Catanea in Sicily († 251), Virgin martyr. Feast, 5th February. She is invoked against fire and is the patroness of mothers suckling their children. Her church in Rome belonged for many years to the Irish College.

Lucia (Lucy) of Syracuse († 304), Virgin martyr. Feast, 13th December. Patroness against sore eyes and epidemic diseases.

Agnes, beloved Saint of Rome, patroness of young girls and of gardeners, martyred in 258 in her 12th year. Feast, 21st January. Octave, 28th January. Her body is in the Church of St. Agnes, Via Nomentana, Rome.

Cecilia, Virgin martyr († 229), Roman, patroness of music since the 15th century. Feast, 22nd November.

Anastasia, widow. Her name inserted by Pope Gregory I. Her Feast, 25th December. The second Station Mass of Christmas Day is celebrated in the church erected in her honour. Devotion to her in Rome—she was not a Roman—was introduced by the Byzantine Court.

Q. *What is noteworthy in this list?*

A. It is drawn from all states of life—a prophet, a deacon, an apostle, a disciple, a bishop, a pope, a priest, a cleric, married women, virgins and a widow—

so that all, no matter of which sex or of what station in life, may be encouraged to fight the enemies of salvation as the saints have done, and may be encouraged to hope for blessedness, not, however, out of consideration of merits of their own, but of God's own free pardon.

Q. *What special prayer was frequently introduced after the "Nobis quoque peccatoribus"?*

A. A prayer for the blessing of the fruits of the earth and of food, e.g. at Easter the blessings of the milk and honey, that were given to the newly-baptised, and, on the feast of the Ascension, the blessing of the first beans.

Q. *Does any instance of the custom survive?*

A. On Holy Thursday the bishop blesses the Oil of the Sick at this portion of the Mass.

Q. *Why were such blessings introduced into the Mass?*

A. The Church has always regarded the Sacrifice of the Mass as the central point of all its liturgy, the source of all grace, of all blessing and of all consecration, and on that account the administration of the Sacraments and of the Sacramentals was intimately united with the celebration of Holy Mass. In the course of time, as necessity arose for the shortening of divine service, the administration of the Sacraments and of the Sacramentals, not, however, of all, was separated from the Holy Sacrifice.

Q. *What Sacraments and Sacramentals are still connected with the celebration of Holy Mass?*

A. (*a*) The Blessed Eucharist, Holy Orders and (though not necessarily) Matrimony.

(*b*) The Blessing of Candles (2nd February), of Ashes (Ash Wednesday), of Palms (Palm Sunday).

Q. *What is the concluding prayer of the Canon?*

A. The prayer which begins with the words *Per quem* (through whom), and which formerly followed immediately upon the *Supplices*—the "Memento" of the Dead and the *Nobis quoque peccatoribus* being of later introduction.

Q. *Into what two clearly defined sections may this concluding prayer be divided?*

A. In the first section it is acknowledged that the Eucharistic gifts are prepared for and given to us by God through Jesus Christ (*Per quem haec omnia, etc.*). In the second section (*Per Ipsum*) it is acknowledged that by the Sacrifice of Christ the highest possible honour and glory is given to God.

Q. *What particular bearing has this prayer upon the significance and excellence of the Mass?*

A. It shows that Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, the eternal High Priest, appears on the altar as the Mediator between God and man—on the one hand, to bless and to enrich man with the graces of salvation, and on the other hand, to offer perfect praise and glory to the Most Blessed Trinity (*cf.* Eisenhofen).

Q. *What does the "haec omnia" ("these Thy ever bountiful gifts") refer to?*

A. To the bread and wine, the species of which are upon the altar.

Q. *Explain the meaning of the verbs "creas" (create), "sanctificas" (sanctify or hallow), "vivificas" (vivify or quicken), "benedicis" (bless), "praestas" (give [to us]).*

A. *Creas:* Through Christ, the Eternal Father creates the bread and wine (and by extension all things).

Sanctificas: Through Christ the Eternal Father sanctifies or hallows the bread and wine in choosing them and determining them for use in the Holy Sacrifice.

Vivificas: Through Christ, the Eternal Father vivifies or quickens them in changing them into the

holy Bread of life everlasting and into the Precious Blood of Christ.

Benedicis: Through Christ, the Eternal Father blesses them in making them the abundant source of divine grace.

Praestas (nobis): Through Christ, the Eternal Father gives them to us in Holy Communion.

Q. *What is symbolised by the three signs of the Cross made over the Chalice at the words "sanctificas," etc.?*

A. They symbolise the sanctification, vivification and blessing of the *oblata* which were accomplished at the consecration, and indicate the copious blessings that are poured out upon the Church in the unbloody renewal of the Sacrifice of the Cross.

Q. *What is the force of the expressions "per Ipsum" (by Him), "cum Ipso" (with Him), and "in Ipso" (in Him) contained in that doxology?*

A. *Per Ipsum* — by Christ, inasmuch as He is our Mediator.

Cum Ipso — with Christ, with Whose homage to the Father and the Holy Ghost we unite our own.

In Ipso — in Christ, in Whom we are incorporated as members of His Body.

—and thus we, by Christ and His Sacrifice, as members of the Mystical Body, of which He is the Head, offer up in union with Him the highest possible honour and glory to the Triune God.

Q. *What conclusion must we draw from this doxology?*

A. That the supreme act of worship is the Sacrifice of the Mass. Nothing else in Catholic devotion is comparable to it in the honour and glory it gives to God and in the blessings it confers on mankind. From it all other devotions derive their efficacy.

Q. *What gestures accompany the recitation of the doxology?*

A. The priest makes three signs of the Cross with the Sacred Host over the Chalice and within its rim to symbolise that the Precious Blood in the Chalice is united with the glorified Body of Christ. He makes two other signs of the Cross between the Chalice and his breast in honour of the Father and of the Holy Ghost. He then holds the Sacred Host over the Chalice which he raises slightly above the corporal to express the offering up of the Sacrifice of praise.

Q. *What was the purpose of this "little elevation" as it is called?*

A. To invite the faithful to adore the Body and Blood of Christ. It was the only elevation of the Sacred species practised up to the 13th century.

Q. *How is the close of the Canon marked?*

A. The priest breaks the silence he has to observe during the whole course of the Canon save at the words *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*, and says in a loud voice (or at High Mass sings) *Per omnia saecula saeculorum*, to which the people, who have kept in silent union with the priest from the beginning of the Canon, answer *Amen*, to express their ardent faith in the great mystery that has been accomplished—the unbloody renewal and representation upon the altar of the Sacrifice of the Cross. This "Amen," which broke the long silence of the people and which constituted a sublime act of faith in the Sacrifice that has been accomplished, was known as the "Great Amen."

Chapter XIII

C.—THE COMMUNION

Q. *What follows upon the sacrificial action of the Canon?*

A. The sacrificial repast or Communion.

Q. *Is the Communion, like the consecration, of the essence of the Sacrifice of the Mass?*

A. The Communion belongs not to the essence but to the integrity of the Sacrifice; in other words the Sacrifice is not completed without Communion.

Q. *On what basis does the idea of the Communion being a sacrificial repast rest?*

A. On the words of Our Divine Lord Himself at the Last Supper: "This is My Body which is given for you (sacrificed for your salvation or in your stead). This is the Chalice, the New Testament in My Blood, which shall be shed for you" (Luc. xxii. 19, 20), and on the words of St. Paul: "The Chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? and the bread, which we break, is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord" (I. Cor. x. 16).

Q. *What therefore is the Church's view of Holy Communion as conveyed in the liturgy of the Mass?*

A. Holy Communion is a partaking of the Victim that has been offered up in sacrifice upon the altar. In return for the supreme honour we have rendered to God by offering up to Him in sacrifice the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, God invites us to His Holy Table,

to the Lord's Supper, and gives us as the food of our soul the very Body and Blood of Jesus Christ—the Victim which we in union with the priest have offered up in sacrifice (*cf.* Kramp).

Q. *As the sacrificial repast follows upon the Sacrifice of the Victim, what is necessary in order that the faithful should participate most actively and most fully in the liturgy of the Mass?*

A. Since the faithful unite with the priest in offering up the Holy Sacrifice, they should, like him, partake of the Victim offered up.

Q. *Has that ideal been ever realised in the history of the Church?*

A. The early Christians—whose spirit the Church's liturgy alone can revive—received Holy Communion at every Mass they attended.

Q. *Is that ideal of conduct still the mind of the Church?*

A. The Council of Trent "would wish that at every Mass the faithful who are present should communicate not merely spiritually but sacramentally by the reception of the Eucharist so that they may derive more abundant fruits from the Most Holy Sacrifice."

Pius X urged parish priests, confessors and preachers to exhort the faithful in frequent and zealous discourse to the practice of daily Communion.

Q. *If Holy Communion be not possible or convenient for us, what should we do instead in order to increase our participation in the Mass?*

A. We should make a spiritual Communion in every Mass we attend at the time of the priest's Communion, thus uniting ourselves at least spiritually with the Divine Victim of the Altar.

Q. *Is it correct to regard the Mass merely as a preparation for Holy Communion?*

A. The Consecration, objectively considered, is the

highest point of the liturgical celebration ; the Communion is, as it were, "the crowning and natural conclusion of the Sacrifice." The Consecration is, so to say, the moment of highest honour to God, the Communion is the moment of greatest grace to the individual communicants according to their respective dispositions. The Mass has as its central motive the honour and glory of God. The personal sanctification we derive from it, other things being equal, is dependent upon the degree in and the dispositions with which we participate in offering up that honour and glory. Compare the response to the *Orate fratres* and note the order observed : "May the Lord receive the Sacrifice at thy hands for the *praise and glory* of *His own name*, to *our* own *benefit*" (*cf.* Stapper).

Q. *Of what does the liturgical preparation for Communion consist?*

A. It consists of the *Pater Noster*, the Breaking of the Bread (that is, the Host), the Mingling of the Sacred Species, the Agnus Dei, the prayer for peace (and in High Mass the kiss of peace exchanged between those in choir), two personal prayers of the priest, the *Panem coelestem*, and the *Domine non sum dignus*.

Q. *What are the oldest elements in this preparation?*

A. The *Pater Noster*, the Breaking of the Bread, the Mingling of the Species and, from the 4th century, the kiss of peace.

Q. *What of the introduction of the other elements?*

A. The Agnus Dei was introduced by Pope Sergius († 701), and the remaining elements had their origin in the private devotions of priests.

Q. *Did the "Pater Noster" always occupy its present position?*

A. In Apostolic times it was said as the immediate preparation for Communion after the Breaking of the

Bread, but towards the end of the 6th century Pope St. Gregory the Great placed it immediately after the Canon, prefixing to it a preface (or introduction) and adding to it an embolism (the *Libera*).

Q. *What special fitness does the "Pater Noster" possess as a liturgical prayer of preparation for Holy Communion?*

A. It is the model of all prayers, taught us by Our Divine Lord Himself. In the "Our Father," which constitutes "a summary of Gospel teaching," we pray for the glory of God, for the fulfilment of His Will on earth, and for the grace to overcome the obstacles to the fulfilment of that Will. The fourth petition as well, from earliest times, was considered to refer not merely to the daily food for the body, but to the heavenly bread for the soul. The "Our Father" is a sacramental and obtains pardon for venial sins in the degree of love we possess. It brings home to us the true brotherhood of men, for we are all children of the one family of which God is the Father. It thus helps to purify the soul and to strengthen the bonds of fraternal charity.

Q. *How should the "Pater Noster" be said at Mass?*

A. The *Pater Noster* with Preface is said aloud (at the High Mass sung) by the priest; the faithful, who should follow the priest in quiet utterance, answer in the person of the server *sed libera nos a malo* (but deliver us from evil). The priest says the *Amen* in quiet voice.

Q. *What purpose does the preface or introduction to the Pater Noster serve?*

A. The introduction is calculated to fill us with reverence for that unique prayer taught by Our Lord Himself, and to inspire us with confidence, as it is in obedience to Divine command that we "dare" to address God as Our Father (*Pater Noster*).

Q. *What is the name given to the special form of prayer, the "Libera," that is added to the "Pater Noster?"*

A. The *Libera* is called the Embolism (from a Greek word, meaning an interpolation, or addition), and is really an expansion of the last petition of the Our Father (*sed libera nos a malo*, but deliver us from evil).

Q. *What do we pray for in the "Libera"?*

A. We pray God to deliver us from all evils past, present and to come, and to grant us interior and exterior peace, that is, freedom from sin and temporal anxieties, imploring the while the Mother of God, SS. Peter and Paul, and St. Andrew to intercede for us.

Q. *What is understood by evils past, present and to come?*

A. *Past* evils are our sins and the wounds they inflict on the soul; *present* evils are all our interior and exterior trials—sickness, poverty, war, and, in general, the countless dangers and temptations which infest our lives; *future* evils are the temporal and, above all, the eternal punishment of sin.

Q. *What is to be observed regarding the saints who are invoked?*

A. They are the first four of the *Communicantes*. The special mention of St. Andrew may be traced to the personal devotion Pope St. Gregory the First had towards him.

Q. *How is the "Libera" said?*

A. It is said in a quiet voice: formerly it was said aloud, as it is on Good Friday to this day.

Q. *With what actions does the priest accompany the recitation of the "Libera"?*

A. He makes the sign of the Cross with the paten at the words "*da propitius pacem, etc.*" (which were added by Pope St. Gregory the Great); kisses the paten and places it under the Host which, since the Consecration, lay on the corporal.

Q. *What is the significance of the sign of the Cross and of the kissing of the paten?*

A. To show that all true peace comes from the Cross and to express reverence for the paten which, through its being consecrated to contain the Body of the Lord, the Author of Peace, came to be regarded as the symbol of peace.

Q. *What is the peace which is so earnestly and insistently prayed for?*

A. It is that peace of God, which "surpasseth all understanding" and which keeps our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philip. iv. 20), that peace which St. Paul wishes should "stand supreme" in our hearts (Col. iii. 15)—the peace which summarises all the blessings of the Redemption. In the *loculi* of the Catacombs, where the faithful were buried, the word *Pax* (peace) expressed the union of the faithful departed with God.

In the liturgy the word "peace" connotes fulness of grace, blessings of salvation and union with God.

Q. *What does the priest do when he has placed the Host on the paten?*

A. As the actions and words of the priest at this point are of wonderful significance it is well to quote the directions of the *Missal*: (*a*) The priest uncovers the chalice, *takes the Host and breaks it in half* over the chalice saying ("Per eundem, etc."—"Through the same, etc."), and he puts the portion that is in his right hand on to the paten; (*b*) *He then breaks off a small piece from the portion which is in his left hand*, saying "Qui tecum vivit," etc. (who liveth, etc.). *He puts the other half* (*less the small piece*) *with his left hand on to the paten* and holding the small piece over the chalice in his right hand and the chalice with his left, he says: "Per omnia," etc. (For ever and ever, etc.). (*c*) *He*

makes the sign of the Cross three times over the chalice with the small piece of the Host, saying : " *Pax Domini*," etc. (The peace of the Lord, etc.). (*d*) *He puts the small piece into the chalice and says* in a low voice : " *Hæc commixtio*," etc. (May this mingling, etc.).

Q. *Was the Breaking of the Bread always regarded as an important ceremony of the Mass?*

A. So important was it in the minds of the early Christians that the *Fractio Panis* (the Breaking of the Bread) was the name which they gave to the Mass.

Q. *What led to this ceremony?*

A. Our Divine Lord Himself broke bread at the Last Supper, and, moreover, the bread in early use consisted of cakes or loaves which had to be broken up to give Communion.

Q. *What is the symbolism of this breaking of the bread and how expressly does it bear upon the preparation for Communion?*

A. As all that eat of the one bread at the one table are regarded as members of the one family united together in bonds of love, so the breaking of the bread before Communion inspires and fosters that spirit of fraternal love which should reign in our hearts as we, the members of the mystical Body of Christ and of the one family of the Church, prepare to receive the Sacrament of love.

Secondly, the breaking of the bread symbolises the suffering inflicted by our sins upon the Body of Our Divine Lord in His bitter Passion, and thus inspires and fosters in us love for God Who showed such love for us.

Q. *What is the history of the special mode of the breaking of the bread?*

A. In early Christian times the bread was broken into three parts—one called the *sancta*, another called

the *fermentum*, and a third part used for the Communion of the celebrant, etc. Though the breaking of the bread for the giving of Communion is no longer necessary, the breaking of the Host still maintains the ancient tradition.

Q. *What was the division of the bread into three parts intended to emphasise?*

A. The unity of the Sacrifice in *time* (the *sancta*) and the unity of Sacrifice in *place* (the *fermentum*), while the third portion expresses the unity that exists between the members of the Church who all partake of the *one Bread* (*cf.* L'Ebraly).

Q. *What was the "Sancta"?*

A. A portion of the Bread, to which the name *Sancta* was given, was broken off and reserved for the succeeding Mass. At the *Fractio* the *Sancta* broken off at the preceding Mass was brought to the altar and dropped into the chalice to show the unity between the two Masses—the same Sacrifice yesterday and to-day.

Q. *Is there any trace of the "Sancta" to be found in the present-day ceremonial?*

A. As it was the custom of the Pope or bishop to adore the *Sancta* on his reaching the choir after the solemn procession up the church during which, it will be remembered, the Introit was sung, so it is still the rule for a bishop to visit the Altar of the Blessed Sacrament on his way to the High Altar when he is about to celebrate in his Cathedral church. Others, without convincing authority, trace the holding of the paten by the sub-deacon at High Mass to the custom of holding the *Sancta* until it was time to bring it to the altar.

Q. *What was the "Fermentum"?*

A. The *Fermentum* emphasised the idea of the unity of the Sacrifice in place—that the Mass is one and the same Sacrifice wherever it is accomplished. The

fermentum [the name given to this second portion that was broken off] was carried by deacons or acolytes from the Cathedral church in which the bishop celebrated to the parochial churches within the city and was dropped into the chalice by the celebrant at the *fractio panis* (the breaking of the bread) of his Mass, to symbolise that the Sacrifice celebrated in the parish church was identical with that celebrated in the Cathedral church. In Rome the *fermentum* was sent from the Pope's Mass to the Mass of the titular priests.

Q. *What other purpose did the "Fermentum" serve?*

A. It symbolised the union between the bishop and his flock and, as it was not infrequently sent by the Pope to a distant bishop, it symbolised the union between the various parts of the Church and the See of Rome.

Q. *What additional ceremony took place at this point of the Mass?*

A. The bishop gave a blessing at this moment of the Mass, and when the *fermentum* was placed in the chalice the parish or district priest blessed the congregation in the name and with the authority of the bishop.

Q. *What special practice has been traced to this special blessing?*

A. Some authors find traces of it in the blessing that is given in the Nuptial Mass before the *Libera*.

Q. *When did the use of the "Sancta" and "Fermentum" cease?*

A. Between the 9th and 11th centuries.

Q. *What of the third portion of the bread that was broken off?*

A. A section of it was reserved for the celebrant, etc.; some more of it was taken away by the deacons for the Communion of the Sick or of those who could not assist at the Mass, and a part of it was dropped into the chalice

before the consumption of the Precious Blood—this latter ceremony being proper to the Papal Mass.

Q. *Which of these different ways of disposing of the three sections into which the bread was divided survives to-day?*

A. The last-mentioned only, that which was proper to the Papal Mass—and even that practice has undergone change ; for the particle is at present dropped into the chalice, not immediately before the consumption of the Precious Blood, but after the *Pax Domini*, etc. (May the Peace of the Lord, etc.)—that same moment of the Mass when the *sancta* and *fermentum* used to be put into the chalice.

Q. *Are both parts that are now placed on the paten always to be consumed by the celebrant?*

A. Yes, as a rule, but in a Papal Mass one part is used for the Communion of the Pope and the other part for the Communion of the cardinal-deacon and cardinal-sub-deacon. At the consecration of a bishop the newly consecrated bishop receives one part from the hands of the consecrating bishop.

Q. *What is signified by the prayer, "Pax Domini," and by the three signs of the Cross which the celebrant makes with the small piece of the Host over the chalice?*

A. A priest while making these signs of the Cross prays in the *Pax Domini* that the peace of God, which he has asked for in the *Libera*, may come to the faithful. The signs of the Cross which accompany this prayer signify that the peace of God is the precious fruit of the Sacrifice of the Cross. To propagate that peace is the divine commission of the Church, peace which is preserved in the soul despite the manifold trials and difficulties of life. In the daily round of the Mass from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof that prayer for peace ascends to heaven. The faithful in the person

of the server answering *Et cum spiritu tuo* (and with thy spirit) wish the same blessing may befall the priest.

Q. *What does the dropping of the small piece of the Host into the chalice, the Mingling of the Species, denote?*

A. That on the altar lies the living Lamb of God, Christ risen and glorious as He is in heaven.

Q. *How does it denote this?*

A. In the Consecration, by the force of the words, the Body and Blood are separated and thus the words of consecration announce the death of the Lord. The mingling of the two species represents to the eye of faith in a vivid manner that the Blood is united to the Body, and that the Christ on the altar is the Christ risen from the dead, not a dead Victim but a Victim glorious and immortal. In the Communion we receive the glorious Christ.

Q. *What else does the mingling of the species represent?*

A. It represents the union of the mystical Body with Christ the Head.

Q. *What, then, briefly does the breaking of the bread and the mingling of the species foster in the soul of the communicant?*

A. The spirit of fraternal love, the spirit of union with Christ—love for one another based on the common love of the Risen Saviour and on the union of all with Him their Head. Communion is, in the words of the Council of Trent, "the sign of unity, the bond of charity, the symbol of concord."

Q. *What explanation is offered for the difficult word "consecratio" (consecration or hallowing) that occurs in the prayer said when the species are mingled?*

A. All agree, of course, that there can be no question of a new consecration of the bread and wine—that has taken place once for all at the Consecration of the Mass.

Some, basing their interpretation on a formula to

be found in an Ambrosian Missal, say the opening words may be rendered: "May this mixed and consecrated Body and Blood of Christ, etc."

Others, with more show of reason, state that the "*consecratio*" cannot refer to the Body and Blood of Christ but only to the *species* of bread and wine; that these were hallowed at the Consecration, and now that they are mixed they receive yet again another hallowing, are yet again made holy—a meaning which the word *consecrare* may well bear.

Q. *What is asked for in this prayer, "Haec commixtio" (by this mingling)?*

A. That the Body and Blood of Christ may avail unto life everlasting—the perfect and ultimate fruit of Holy Communion.

Q. *What is the purpose of the Agnus Dei?*

A. To foster lively faith and deep humility in hearts purified from sin.

Q. *How do the actions of the priest during the recitation strengthen this interpretation of the Agnus Dei?*

A. The priest directs his eyes towards the Sacred Host, Which he acknowledges to be the Son of God Who, by dying upon the Cross, redeemed the world from sin. Conscious of his own sinfulness he asks pardon for sin and return of peace to his soul, and strikes his breast three times in sign of his repentance. The faithful should recite the *Agnus Dei* with the priest and strike their breasts in penance too.

Q. *When was the Agnus Dei introduced into the liturgy of the Roman Church?*

A. The *Agnus Dei*, which is taken from the words spoken by St. John the Baptist of Our Divine Lord, was introduced into the Mass by Pope Sergius I (701) to be sung alternately by priests and people during the ceremony of the breaking of the bread.

Q. *Have any subsequent changes been affected in its recitation?*

A. In the beginning all the invocations of the *Agnus Dei* (the Lamb of God) were followed by *miserere nobis* (have mercy on us) as still in the responses of the choir of St. John Lateran's, but since the 11th century the number of invocations has been definitely limited to three, and *da nobis pacem* (grant us peace) has been substituted for the third *miserere nobis*—constituting a further request for the peace of God so often implored during the Canon. In Requiem Masses the responses to the *Agnus Dei* are *dona eis requiem* (grant them rest) said twice, and *dona eis requiem sempiternam* (eternal rest) said at the end of the third invocation.

Q. *What follows upon the "Agnus Dei"?*

A. Once more a prayer for peace which was introduced in the 11th century as a preparation for the kiss of peace—that token of fraternal love, which was a marked characteristic of the ceremonies of Holy Mass, exchanged originally before the presentation of the offerings took place, later in the 4th century exchanged as an immediate preparation for Holy Communion. At the "Pax Domini" all who were to communicate gave the "kiss of peace," the sacred ministers, the clergy, the men to one another, and the women to one another in prescribed ceremonial manner and order. Since the 11th century the kiss of peace is given only in High Mass, after the prayer for peace, and exchanged only between the sacred ministers and those who assist in choir. If one of the laity be privileged to receive the kiss of peace, it is given him by means of the instrument of peace called the *osculatorium* or *pacificale* (*v.*, p. 40). This special privilege is enjoyed by every Catholic Lord Mayor of Dublin in gratitude for the valued services rendered to the Catholic cause in the

struggle for Catholic Emancipation by Daniel O'Connell, the great Irish Statesman, at one time Lord Mayor of Dublin.

Q. *What is the substance of this prayer for peace?*

A. The priest recalling the words of Our Divine Lord: "I leave you peace," and conscious that his own sinfulness might be a barrier to the granting of the peace he asks, implores Our Divine Lord, to look not upon his sins but upon the faith of the Church and so vouchsafe to her peace and union—the interests of the Church as a whole prevailing over every personal interest.

Q. *What is the special characteristic of the two succeeding prayers?*

A. They are said in the singular and constitute the personal preparation of the priest for the reception of Holy Communion.

Q. *How have these prayers arisen?*

A. At this point of the Mass while the *pax* was being given it was usual for the priests, more especially in the monasteries, to say private prayers of preparation, and of those many and borrowed prayers, two—*Domine Jesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi* (O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God) and the *Perceptio Corporis Tui* (Let not the receiving of Thy Body)—have been adopted by the Church into its liturgy. It is probable that there was a prayer, corresponding to the *Perceptio*, said before the consumption of the chalice, but no trace of it is extant.

Q. *What further notes of preparation do these prayers imply?*

A. In the *Domine Jesu Christe:* The priest—with whom the faithful should unite—asks for freedom from sin and its consequences, for grace to persevere in God's commandments, for close union with Christ, and

for grace to overcome all obstacles that tend to hinder that union—that union which we know to be nowhere more perfect than in sacramental Communion.

In the *Perceptio:* The priest acknowledges his unworthiness, and filled with reverence for Jesus, really truly, and substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament, prays to be saved from the awful curse of a bad Communion, so that God's judgment and condemnation may never fall upon him. He implores God that the Communion he is about to receive may benefit him in soul and body, that it may safeguard him against every enticement to sin and every danger to salvation.

Q. *What is conveyed by the words, "Panem Coelestem" (I will take the bread of heaven)?*

A. Ardent desire to receive Holy Communion and loving trust in the power of God.

Q. *What is conveyed by the "Domine, non sum dignus"?*

A. The priest, from the keen consciousness of his own infirmities, humbles himself in the sight of the Lord, strikes his breast in sorrow for his sins, and in the realization of God's power and goodness expresses his assurance of God's forgiveness.

Q. *Where are the words, "Domine, non sum dignus," taken from?*

A. From St. Matthew, viii. 8—the words *anima mea* (my soul) being substituted for *puer meus* (my son).

Q. *What action and what words accompany the actual reception of the Sacred Host?*

A. The priest makes the sign of the Cross with the Host held in his right hand, saying the meanwhile: *Corpus Domini*, etc., "May the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul unto life everlasting. Amen." —an act of lively faith in the Real Presence and in the efficacy of the Most Holy Sacrament.

Q. *How is the consumption of the Precious Blood prepared for?*

A. The priest, filled with gratitude for the ineffable gift of God, asks what return will he make, gathers up the fragments of the Host, drops them into the chalice; holds the chalice, expresses his faith and confidence once more, makes the sign of the Cross with the chalice, and with words similar to those used in receiving the Host, he consumes the Precious Blood.

Q. *Does the priest in communicating under the two species of bread and wine receive more than the laity, who communicate under the species of bread alone?*

A. The priest does not receive more than the laity. Both partake of the one undivided Living Saviour's Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity.

Q. *Describe the ceremony of giving the Communion to the faithful within the Mass?*

A. The server in the name of the faithful recites the *Confiteor* and the priest says the *Misereatur* and the *Indulgentiam*, making the sign of the Cross over the people as he says the *Indulgentiam*, takes one of the Sacred Particles in his right hand, and with the ciborium in his left turns round facing the people, holding the Sacred Particle over the ciborium. He then says standing on the predella the words, *Ecce Agnus Dei* (Behold the Lamb of God Who takest away the sins of the world), repeats three times the *Domine, non sum dignus*, and advances from the altar to the Communion rail to distribute Holy Communion. He makes the sign of the Cross before each communicant, saying the words, *Corpus Domini* (May the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ keep thy soul to life everlasting), and then places the Sacred Host upon the tongue.

Q. *What is the significance of these prayers and gestures?*

A. The *Confiteor* is at once an humble confession of

and repentance for sin before heaven and earth and a confident appeal for the intercession of the Mother of God and of the saints, and for the prayers of our brethren on our behalf.

The *Misereatur* and the *Indulgentiam* are sacramentals that in the measure of the charity we possess remove venial sins and thus lead to a more fruitful reception of the Blessed Sacrament.

Ecce Agnus Dei, etc., is an expression of lively faith in the presence of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, and of confident hope in the mercy and goodness of God.

Domine, non sum dignus, etc., is an expression of our unworthiness to receive within our breast the God of Heaven and of Earth, of belief in God's power to purify our souls and trust in God's willingness to do so.

The sign of the Cross made by the priest is to remind us that Holy Communion is the most perfect gift won for us by the Sacrifice of the Cross, and at the same time constitutes a final blessing with the Sacred Host to prepare us the better for its worthy reception.

The words, *Corpus Domini*, etc. (May the Body of the Lord, etc.), constitute a prayer that the Holy Communion we receive may gain for our soul the choicest fruit of all—viz., life everlasting.

Q. *How should the faithful act?*

A. They should say the *Confiteor* with the server and receive the absolution with sorrowful and loving hearts. They should look with lively faith upon the Sacred Host held in the priest's hand as he says *Ecce Agnus Dei* (Behold the Lamb of God), and in deep humility bow the head and strike the breast while they say with the priest *Domine, non sum dignus* (Lord, I am not worthy, etc.). They should then approach the altar with due reverence and order to receive the Sacred

Host. With thoughts all centred on Jesus, Whom they bear in their bosoms, they should retire from the altar rails for fervent thanksgiving, which should in ordinary circumstances last not less than one quarter of an hour.

Q. *What lesson is enforced by the active participation in the liturgy of the Mass as hitherto outlined?*

A. As all belong to the one Communion, the one society, the mystical Body of Christ, as all have offered up the same Sacrifice and have partaken of the same sacrificial food, the active participation of the Mass brings home to the mind and heart, as nothing else in life can, the need and duty of fraternal love—the mark of the true disciples of Christ. Every Mass we assist at deepens the conviction that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ and fosters in us the spirit of fraternal charity.

Q. *Was Communion always given to the faithful as it is given now?*

A. For centuries the faithful, those of them who communicated within the Mass, received Communion under the two species of bread and wine.

Q. *By whom was the administration of the Communion carried out?*

A. The bishop or priest gave the Sacred Host and the deacon gave the Precious Blood.

Q. *How was the Sacrament administered?*

A. The celebrant placed the Host in the hands of the communicant, saying *Corpus Domini* ("the Body of Our Lord"), to which the communicant answered *Amen* ("So it is"—"That I believe in"); the deacon presented the chalice saying *Sanguis Christi* ("the Blood of Christ"), to which the communicant answered *Amen*.

Q. *How were the hands of the communicant held?*

A. The hands formed a kind of throne for the King

of Glory: the right hand being placed over the left—the hands of men being bare, the hands of women, certainly in the Gallican rite, being covered with a white linen cloth called the dominical. Each one adored the Sacred Host held in the hand, and raised it to the mouth.

Q. *How did the communicants receive the chalice?*

A. At first by drinking the Precious Blood directly out of the chalice; in the early Middle Ages they drank the Precious Blood through a reed (*fistula*) placed in the chalice; later on, the Sacred Host was dipped into the Precious Blood and placed upon the tongue—the present practice in the Eastern Church. From the 7th–9th century Communion was given under the second species only to those who desired it.

Instead of the Precious Blood was given unconsecrated wine, in which either a small particle of the Host was put, or into which a few drops of the Precious Blood was poured from the chalice.

Q. *What posture did the communicants assume?*

A. They stood while receiving Holy Communion. It was not until the Middle Ages that it became the custom to kneel.

Q. *When did the custom cease of placing the Sacred Host in the hand?*

A. About the 9th century.

Q. *When was the custom of giving Holy Communion under one species definitely established?*

A. It was well established in the last quarter of the 13th century, was enforced by the Church at the time of the Hussite heresy which denied that Communion under one species was valid, and in 1415 at the Council of Constance it became the law of the Church.

Q. *Do any exceptions to that law exist?*

A. At the Consecration of a Bishop, the consecrating

Bishop gives the Precious Blood out of the chalice to the new bishop ; at the Papal Mass the Cardinal-deacon and Cardinal-sub-deacon partake of the Pope's chalice.

Q. *What further custom was introduced instead of giving the Precious Blood?*

A. Unconsecrated wine was given to the communicant after the reception of the Sacred Host by way of ablution.

Q. *Has that custom survived in present-day liturgy?*

A. In the Ordination Mass the newly-ordained priests receive this ablution wine after their Holy Communion.

Q. *What led to the abandonment of the custom of giving Holy Communion under the species of wine?*

A. The danger of spilling and of thus desecrating the Precious Blood, together with the objection, that grew with time, to drinking out of a chalice used for many different people—this danger and this objection becoming greater as communicants multiplied. The practice was finally abolished as an answer to heretics, who asserted that Communion, to be valid, should be taken under the two species.

Q. *Did the practice ever exist of giving Communion under the species of wine alone?*

A. Children who received Holy Communion immediately after their baptism—a custom that prevailed for some time—communicated under the species of wine, a few drops of the Precious Blood being placed within their mouth.

D. The Thanksgiving after Communion

Q. *What is to be remarked about the liturgical thanksgiving after Communion?*

A. The public thanksgiving is brief, consisting only of a few prayers, for the Church supposes that the

communicants will remain in private prayer holding secret and devout communion with the Lord, Who has entered into the heart of each one.

Q. *Of what does the liturgical thanksgiving consist?*

A. Of the two prayers which the priest says at the purification and the ablution, viz., *Quod ore sumpsimus* (Grant, O Lord, that what we have taken with our mouth, etc.) and *Corpus tuum* (May thy Body), of the Communion Antiphon (called the *Communio*), the Post-communion, and in ferial Masses in Lent the *Oratio super populum* (the Prayer over the people).

Q. *What is the origin of the "Quod ore sumpsimus"?*

A. It is a Post-communion that dates back to the 4th century and is still to be found in the Missal as the Post-communion of Holy Thursday.

Q. *What petitions are made in it?*

A. That the communion we have received may be made fruitful in grace by the purity of our heart, and that the temporal gift—the sacrifice we have offered up, and the Communion we have received—may produce in us lasting effects and thus lead us to eternal life.

Q. *What is the substance of the next prayer, "Corpus tuum"?*

A. In this prayer the priest begs that the Sacramental Presence of Our Lord, which endures only as long as the Sacred Species he has consumed remains incorrupt, may have abiding and deep-seated effects on his soul.

Q. *How does this prayer differ from the preceding?*

A. The *Quod ore* is said in the plural and is offered up on behalf of the celebrant and all the communicants, while the *Corpus tuum*—which is said in the singular—may be regarded as special to the priest himself, who alone has received the Body and Blood under the two species of bread and wine.

Q. *May the faithful unite with the priest as he recites these prayers?*

A. No more fitting prayers of thanksgiving can be offered up to God.

Q. *What is the "Communio"?*

A. The *Communio* is an antiphon which varies each day with reference to the liturgical year and which very frequently suggests the special grace we should ask for as the fruit of our Communion.

Q. *Where is this antiphon taken from?*

A. It is taken from the Psalms or from other portions of the Scripture, but occasionally from ecclesiastical writings—e.g., the Acts of the Martyrs—*cf.*, St. Agatha, 5th February, and St. Ignatius, 1st February.

Q. *What is the origin of the "Communio"?*

A. It is analogous to the Introit and the Offertory; for it originally consisted of a psalm which was sung by the choir while Holy Communion was being distributed. When the general Communion of the faithful ceased to be the practice in High Mass (that is about 11th century), the psalm was dropped and the antiphon alone remained.

Q. *Do the antiphons of the "Communio" follow any definite rule?*

A. Not strictly definite. It will be observed, however, that the Communion antiphons of Sundays in Advent refer to the coming of Our Lord, that the Communion antiphons from Ash Wednesday to Palm Sunday (with the exception of Station Masses of Thursdays, which were introduced in the 8th century), are taken from a regular succession of Psalms (1 to 26—five of these psalms giving place, however, to extracts from the Gospel of the day). A like sequence of psalms holds from the 1st to the 17th Sunday after Pentecost.

Q. *Is there any survival of the old form of "Communio"?*

A. The old form survives in the *Communio* of the Dead Mass in the repetition of the "*Cum sanctis tuis*" (With thy saints forever, etc.).

Q. *At which side of the altar is the Communio said?*

A. It is said at the Epistle side, the book being transferred from the Gospel side after the ablutions.

Q. *What follows upon the recitation of the "Communio"?*

A. The priest goes to the centre of the altar, kisses it, turns towards the people and exchanges with them the mutual greeting, *Dominus vobiscum.*

Q. *Is this greeting of special appropriateness?*

A. It is, because both the priest and the people have received the Lord (the people at least spiritually), and both pray that the spirit of the Lord may abide.

Q. *What is the Post-communion?*

A. The Post-communion, which corresponds to the Collect and Secret and is like them variable each day, is a prayer of petition offered up by the priest on his own behalf and on behalf of all who have communicated (sacramentally or at least spiritually).

Q. *What is the nature of the petition?*

A. The petition, which is enforced by reference to the mystery or feast of the day or the Sacrifice that has been offered up or the Communion that has been received, is generally directed towards an abundant share in and an abiding possession of the fruits of the Sacrifice and of Holy Communion. No greater testimony of the spirit of thanksgiving can be given than the desire to treasure the fruits of the Sacrifice and the sacrificial repast. "The best preparation for the morrow's Communion is the Communion of to-day."

Q. *What is the history of the Post-communion?*

A. The Post-communion is almost as old as the Mass itself, and was originally called the completing prayer of the Sacrifice (*Oratio ad Complendum*). In the Middle Ages the Post-communion used to be called *Complenda*.

Q. *Are there often two or more Post-communions said at Mass?*

A. Frequently, for the Post-communion corresponds to the Collect, and there are as many additional Post-communions (and Secrets as well) as there are commemorations in the Mass.

Q. *Is the Post-communion always the completing prayer of the Mass?*

A. A special prayer was added to serve as the priest's blessing, and this prayer, called the "Prayer over the People" (*Oratio super populum*), is found now only in the ferial Masses of Lent.

Q. *How is this prayer introduced?*

A. The priest says *Oremus* (Let us pray), and bowing towards the altar, says "*Humiliate capita vestra Deo*" (Bow down your heads before God).

Q. *How should the people act while this prayer is being read or sung?*

A. They should listen to the prayer with bowed heads.

Q. *What is the origin of this "Prayer over the People"?*

A. Some hold it probably arose from the custom of saying Vespers on certain days after the Holy Sacrifice was offered up, as is still the custom on Holy Saturday, and hence, the identity between the *Oratio super populum* and the prayer of the Breviary at the ferial Vespers of Lent.

Others drawing a comparison with other liturgies regard the *Oratio super populum* (Prayer over the People) as a blessing which completes the Sacrifice and which is addressed to all the faithful present. As the blessing was accompanied by a genuflection or prostra-

tion —the usual ceremonies at prayers in times of penance (compare the solemn prayers of Good Friday)—the prayer came to be regarded as proper only to the penitential season. Hence its use on the ferials of Lent. It is omitted on Sundays in Lent because on Sundays no penitential ceremonies were practised in the recitation of prayers.

Chapter XIV

THE CONCLUSION OF THE MASS

Q. *What are the concluding prayers of the Mass?*

A. The *Ite, Missa est*, the prayer to the Blessed Trinity (*Placeat Sancta Trinitas*—"May my worship," etc., etc.), the Blessing, the Last Gospel.

Q. *What follows upon the Post-communion or on some days, upon the "Oratio super populum" (the Prayer over the People)?*

A. The priest once more exchanges greetings with the people, *Dominus Vobiscum*, and then formally dismisses the people with the words, *Ite Missa est* (go, you are dismissed),* which in High Mass are sung by the deacon.

Q. *What is the origin of the "Ite, Missa est"?*

A. It was the usual formula of dismissal at the rising of the courts of justice in Rome, and being adopted in the church services, constituted at this point, up to the 10th century, the actual conclusion of the Mass at Rome. We have seen that it was the formula, uttered by the deacon, for the dismissal of the Catechumens, public sinners, etc., before the Mass of the Faithful.

Q. *When is the "Ite, Missa est" employed in the Mass?*

A. On occasions more or less festive or joyous in

* St. Thomas explains it thus: "The deacon on festival days *dismisses* the people at the end of Mass, by saying: *Ite, missa est*, that is, the Victim has been sent (*missa*) to God through the angel, so that it may be accepted by God" (*Summa Theol.*, Part III., Q. 83, Art. 4).

character—that is, at all Masses in which the *Gloria in excelsis* is said or sung.

Q. *What alternatives are to be found to it?*

A. The *Benedicamus Domino* (let us bless the Lord), and at a Mass of the Dead, *Requiescant in pace* (may they rest in peace), both of which were introduced into the Mass in the 11th century.

Q. *What was the object of their introduction?*

A. They served as an invitation to remain on for further exercise of prayer after the Mass had been concluded: on the days when *Benedicamus* was said—days of fasting and penance, or of special petition—the Divine Office was said immediately after Mass, while on the occasions, when Mass of the Dead was said, the Absolution would usually follow.

Q. *What is the response to "Ite, Missa est" and the "Benedicamus Domino"?*

A. The server in the name of the faithful answers: *Deo Gratias* (Thanks be to God)—an expression of thanksgiving, a characteristic note of the whole Mass, for the wonderful favour of assisting at the sublime Sacrifice of the Mass, and of partaking sacramentally or spiritually of the Victim of the Altar.

Q. *Account for the words, "Requiescant in pace."*

A. They are a shortened form of the well-known prayer: "*Fidelium animae per misericordiam Dei requiescant in pace*" (May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace). The Church in its liturgy always unites a prayer for all the souls in Purgatory with its special prayers on behalf of a deceased person or persons.

Q. *What is the response to the "Requiescant in pace"?*

A. The server answers *Amen* to express the willing union of the people with the priest's prayer for the poor souls in Purgatory.

Q. *What is the position of the priest as he says the Ite, Missa est?*

A. He is facing the people as he gives notice of the conclusion of the Sacrifice.

Q. *What is the position of the priest as he says the "Benedicamus Domino" or the "Requiescant in pace"?*

A. He is facing the altar as if to invite the people to further prayer with him, or rather as they are prayers he turns towards the altar to say them.

Q. *When did the "Ite, Missa est" cease to be the announcement of the actual conclusion of the Mass?*

A. In the 11th century, when the prayer to the Blessed Trinity, the *Placeat*, and the Blessing were added. When the Blessing was first introduced as a regular feature of the Mass it preceded the *Placeat*. The present arrangement was definitely fixed in the 15th century.

Q. *What is the substance of the "Placeat," the prayer to the Blessed Trinity?*

A. It is a summary of all the oblation prayers hitherto said at the Mass both before and after the Consecration. The priest with deepened humility and keener consciousness of his sinfulness invokes the Blessed Trinity to accept, despite his unworthiness, the Sacrifice he has offered up, and to vouchsafe that it will prove fruitful in grace of pardon for himself and for all those for whom he has offered it up.

Q. *What gestures accompany the "Placeat"?*

A. The priest, in testimony of his unworthiness, bows down before the altar as he recites this prayer, and at the conclusion of it he kisses the altar to express his union with Christ, Whom the altar represents, and his union with the saints whose relics are contained in the altar.

Q. *What is the ceremony of the Blessing?*

A. The priest raises his eyes upwards (as if to draw blessing from heaven), stretches out his hands, lifts and joins them, bowing his head before the Cross (from which all blessing comes), and says: *Benedicat, etc.*, "May God Almighty bless you." He then turns to the people, and making one sign of the Cross, continues *Pater, etc.*, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." The server answers "Amen."

Q. *Is the Blessing given at every Mass?*

A. It is given at every Mass except at Mass of the Dead.

Q. *Is the Blessing always given with but one sign of the Cross over the people?*

A. A bishop makes three signs of the Cross when imparting the blessing, directed respectively to the left, centre, and right.

Q. *When were the numbers of signs of the Cross fixed definitely?*

A. That there should be but one sign of the Cross made by the priest, and three by the bishop—to express his higher dignity—was definitely laid down by St. Pius V on the occasion of the publication of the typical edition of the Missal (1570), and by Clement VIII (1605), on the occasion of the publication of the typical edition of the Pontifical. Previous to this legislation, priests made one or three, or even four signs of the Cross, and frequently made them with a paten or chalice held in the hand.

Q. *What is the purport of the Blessing?*

A. To preserve for all those who assist at Mass the precious fruits of the Sacrifice they have offered up.

Q. *Is this Blessing of great import?*

A. This Blessing is most important and efficacious, for it is the official Blessing of the Church, the Spouse of Christ, and, as long as we place no obstacle in its

way, it cannot but receive a hearing from God. Our Holy Mother the Church wishes us, as far as is possible for us, to be fortified with that blessing before the beginning of each day's work.

Q. *What is the origin of this Blessing?*

A. It probably arose from the blessing the Pope used to impart as he passed through the ranks of the assembled clergy and faithful on his return from the High Altar to the sacristy after the celebration of the Station Mass.

Another explanation is given. The bishop used to impart a Blessing at the "*Pax Domini, etc.,*" said at the breaking of the bread—a blessing which was subsequently transferred to the end of the Mass. In the course of time the people grew to expect a Blessing at the end of the Mass, and the priests, in their turn, adopted the practice, which was at length officially acknowledged by the Church.

Q. *What is the Last Gospel of the Mass?*

A. The prologue of St. John's Gospel (I. 1-14), as a rule.

Q. *Mention some of the occasions on which a special* Gospel is said for the Last Gospel?

A. Whenever, in general, a Sunday, or a privileged ferial, or a vigil is commemorated in the Mass, the Gospel of the Sunday or of the ferial or of the vigil is said as the Last Gospel.

Q. *What is the origin of this Last Gospel?*

A. Frequently in the Middle Ages the pious practice of reading a passage of the Gospel was added to a formula of Blessing. The faithful were much attached to this devout practice, and after a time it became a daily and a universal rite to read after the Last Blessing of the Mass a passage of the Gospel—most frequently the opening words of St. John—over the people from the Gospel side of the altar.

It may, too, have arisen from the practice of priests reciting these verses of St. John by way of private devotion on their return to the sacristy—an explanation which is supported by the rubric obliging bishops when celebrating solemn High Mass in their own diocese to recite the Last Gospel of St. John on their way from the altar to the throne at which they unvest.

It was made a definite part of the liturgy of the Mass by St. Pius V in the 16th century.

Q. *What is the origin of the practice of saying as Last Gospel the Gospel of a commemorated Sunday, ferial or vigil?*

A. The custom of saying the so-called *Missa Sicca* (or Dry Mass). Whenever the Mass of a vigil, for instance, was impeded, it was a custom of many priests to read the mere formula of the Mass of the impeded vigil as an exercise of devotion.

Q. *What makes the prologue of St. John's Gospel a most fitting conclusion of the Mass?*

A. In it we profess with lively faith that the Word is God, is Creator of all things, is the Redeemer of the World, Who was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. In the Holy Mass the Word made Flesh becomes the food of our souls. "He fixes His tent amongst us upon the altar, takes up His dwelling in our hearts and enlightens us with His Divine grace and truth." In the intimate union into which we enter with Him in the reception of the Blessed Sacrament we are moved to realise with ardent faith that we are born of God, we are moved to rejoice in the glorious privilege of Divine filiation, of our adoption as sons; for there is given us a pledge of our future glory.

Q. *What connection of thought may be traced between the opening psalm (Judica, Ps. 42) of the Mass and the concluding Gospel?*

A. The Mass opens with the ineffable longing of the Old Dispensation, "*Emitte lucem Tuam et veritatem Tuam*" (Send forth Thy light and truth), and ends with the expression of its fulfilment in the New, "*Et vidimus gloriam ejus, etc.*" (And we saw His glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth) (*cf.* Gihr).

Q. *With what actions is the recitation of the Gospel accompanied?*

A. The priest makes one sign of the Cross upon the altar (or sometimes on the chart) and three on himself, as at the First Gospel. The faithful, too, should make the signs of the Cross with the priest, on their forehead, lips and breast. When the priest genuflects at the words "*Et verbum,*" ("The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us,") they should genuflect in reverent adoration of the mystery of the Incarnation, and having risen, stand until the Gospel is concluded.

Q. *How does the Gospel close?*

A. With the note of thanksgiving, *Deo gratias*, said by the server, in which all should join in low voice—thanksgiving for all the blessings the Word made Flesh has wrought for mankind, more especially thanksgiving for the Holy Sacrifice which resumes all the blessings of Creation and of Redemption. It is a note of thanksgiving that is expected to ring through all our day and endure from Mass to Mass through all our life.

Q. *Account for the De Profundis said in Ireland after Mass.*

A. In the Penal times all records of foundation Masses for the Dead were wantonly destroyed and the monies confiscated. To compensate in some way for the subsequent loss to the Poor Souls the privilege of saying the *De Profundis* for the Poor Souls after Low Mass was granted to Ireland.

Q. *When were the prayers introduced which the priest says in Latin or in the vernacular at the foot of the altar?*

A. They were ordered in a troublous time for the Church by Pope Leo XIII in 1884. Twenty years later the invocations of the Sacred Heart were added on by Pope Pius X.

Q. *What of the thanksgiving prayers of the priest?*

A. Since the 11th century the Canticle of the three youths in the fiery furnace has been adopted by the Church as a formula of thanksgiving. Full of joy at the adorable mysteries that have taken place at the altar, the priest calls upon all nature, animate and inanimate, to sing the praises of the Lord. Psalm 150 swells the note of praise. The *Pater Noster* follows, with versicles and responses that lead on to three prayers.

Q. *What of these three prayers?*

A. The first prayer is the usual prayer that follows the Canticle of the *Benedicite*, when it occurs in the Missal on Saturdays of Quarter Tense. Recalling the miraculous preservation of the three youths in the fiery furnace it is a petition to God to extinguish all unholy desires in the heart.

The second prayer asks for Divine assistance in all the works and labours and moments of the day; while the third, alluding to the heroic steadfastness of St. Lawrence, Martyr, makes petition for help in the fight against sinful desires and sinful passions.

Q. *How are the prayer of St. Lawrence and the preceding versicles accounted for?*

A. This prayer, with the versicles that precede it, passed into general use from their being prescribed in the Middle Ages in the Papal Chapel, in which the Pope said Mass on ordinary days. This chapel was called

the *Sancta Sanctorum* from the richness of the relics it possessed. The versicles were said in honour of the saints whose relics were enshrined in the Papal Chapel, and the prayer was said in honour of the beloved martyr, St. Lawrence, to whom the *Sancta Sanctorum* was dedicated.

Chapter XV

A. SOLEMN HIGH MASS

Q. *How many sacred ministers are required for the ordinary Solemn High Mass?*

A. Three—celebrant, deacon and sub-deacon. Of these the celebrant must be a priest; the deacon may be either a priest or deacon; the sub-deacon may be either a priest, deacon or sub-deacon. In exceptional circumstances and with definite restrictions the part of sub-deacon may be taken by a cleric merely.

Q. *Besides the sacred ministers what others are required for High Mass?*

A. A certain number of servers or acolytes to wait upon the sacred ministers and a choir to sing the Proper and the Common of the Mass.

Q. *What parts of the Mass are assigned to the choir?*

A. The Proper, viz., the Introit, the Gradual, Alleluia (or Tract), Sequence, Offertory, and the *Communio*, as well as certain portions of the Ordinary of the Mass, called the Common (in which, however, it is better for the whole congregation, when possible, to join), viz., the *Kyrie*, the *Gloria in excelsis*, the *Credo*, the *Sanctus*, the *Benedictus qui venit* after the Elevation, the *Agnus Dei* and the various Responses.

Q. *What chief parts of the Mass does the celebrant sing?*

A. The celebrant intones the *Gloria* and *Credo*, sings the Preface and the *Pater Noster*. It was not at first the practice for the celebrant to recite the parts of the Mass sung by the deacon, sub-deacon or choir. Now the celebrant recites the whole Mass except the *Ite, Missa Est*.

Q. *What does the deacon sing?*

A. The deacon sings the Gospel and the *Ite, Missa est* (or *Benedicamus Domino*), or in Solemn Requiem Mass *Requiescant in pace.*

Q. *What does the sub-deacon sing?*

A. The sub-deacon sings the Epistle.

Q. *What are the chief ceremonial duties of the deacon?*

A. To assist the celebrant, to incense him and the choir, to hand the celebrant the Host, pour wine into the chalice, offer up the chalice with the celebrant, to assist the celebrant at the book from the *Sanctus* to the Communion when not otherwise engaged, to remove and to replace the pall, to receive the *Pax* from the celebrant and give it to the sub-deacon, to transfer the book to the Epistle side for the *Communio.*

Q. *What are the chief ceremonial duties of the sub-deacon?*

A. To transfer the Missal to the Gospel side for the reading of the first Gospel by the celebrant, to hold the Gospel book while the deacon sings the Gospel. Wearing the humeral veil he brings the chalice, etc., from the credence table to the altar for the Offertory, pours water into the chalice, holds the paten covered by the humeral veil at the foot of the altar from the offering up of the chalice until towards the end of the *Pater Noster*, gives the *Pax* to the choir, assists at the purifications and ablutions after the Communion of the celebrant, purifies the chalice and assists the celebrant at the last Gospel, transferring the Missal if necessary. [In Solemn Requiem Mass the sub-deacon does not hold the paten.]

Q. *What part is played by the deacon and sub-deacon conjointly?*

A. They recite the opening prayers of the Mass with the celebrant at the foot of the altar, recite the *Gloria*,

Credo, *Sanctus* (if customary), and *Agnus Dei* with the celebrant at the altar.

Q. *What are the more striking ceremonies of the High Mass?*

A. (*a*) The entrance procession up the church during the close of which, as the sacred ministers approach the altar, the Introit is sung by the choir.

(*b*) The formation of the Gospel group for the singing of the Gospel. The deacon, sub-deacon, two acolytes with lighted candles, a thurifer (and frequently an additional server), assemble at the foot of the altar, genuflect, and march to that part of the choir at which the Gospel is to be sung, the deacon holding the Gospel Book in his hands. The deacon stands opposite to the sub-deacon into whose hands he places the book. Beside him is the thurifer to hand the thurible for the incensation of the book. Beside the sub-deacon are the two acolytes. After the singing of the Gospel the sub-deacon brings the book to the celebrant who kisses it, and then the deacon incenses the celebrant, who is incensed because he represents Christ at the altar. The book is incensed and attended with lights because Christ speaks from it.

(*c*) The incensation of the Host and chalice, of the Crucifix, of the relics, of the altar, of the sacred ministers, the choir and the people.

(*d*) At the *Sanctus* acolytes with lighted candles kneel in front of the altar or on opposite sides of it until the Elevation is over. (In Solemn Dead Mass they remain until after the consumption of the chalice.)

(*e*) The giving of the *Pax* to symbolise the fraternal charity that should actuate all who partake of the altar of God. The celebrant gives the kiss of peace to the deacon, who gives it to the sub-deacon. The sub-deacon gives it to the choir.

Q. *How often is the altar incensed?*

A. The altar is incensed twice—first, before the celebrant recites the *Introit*, and again before the *Lavabo*.

Q. *What is the origin of the first incensation?*

A. It has arisen from the custom, observed in the early times of the Church, of suspending from the altar the thuribles which were carried before the bishop in the entrance procession up the church to the High Altar.

Q. *When was the second incensation introduced?*

A. About the 11th century. It constitutes a special hallowing of the offerings, the altar and all present, in view of the sacrificial action that is about to take place.

Q. *Why does the celebrant incense the altar between the candlesticks that stand upon it?*

A. The incensation of the back of the altar is a reminder of the time when it was customary (as is still the case in the consecration of an altar) to incense the altar all round.

Q. *Why is St. Michael, the Archangel, invoked in the blessing of the incense?*

A. Because he is the Prince of Angels, and the Guardian Angel of the Church. The angels offer up our prayers as sweet incense to God.

Q. *What important lesson is implied in the opening words of the "Dirigatur"?*

A. That both priest and people should unite their prayers with the Sacrifice of Christ.

Q. *What petitions are formulated in that prayer?*

A. Realising that prayers are graciously heard by God only when they proceed from pure lips and a pure heart we pray that God may place a guard over our lips and our heart lest they offend Him; and if we have offended, we pray that we will not add to our offence by making vain excuses.

Q. *What is the meaning of the prayer the celebrant utters as he returns the thurible to the deacon?*

A. He prays that as the incense in the thurible is aglow with fire, so may all hearts be aglow with the fire of Divine love, which Christ has come to enkindle on earth.

B. Missa Cantata

Q. *How does the Missa Cantata differ from High Mass?*

A. There is only one sacred minister—the celebrant—who sings the Gospel at the altar, and the *Ite, Missa est* (or its alternative) in addition to what he sings at High Mass; the Epistle is supposed to be sung by a cleric.

There is no incensation of the altar except by special indult or by the permission of the Ordinary.

The choir act as at High Mass.

C. Pontifical High Mass at the Throne

Q. *What are the main features of the Pontifical Mass sung by a bishop in his own diocese?*

A. 1. In addition to the sub-deacon and deacon of the Mass there are three other sacred ministers required, viz., the assistant priest and the two assistant deacons at the throne.

2. The first portion of the Mass—at least that part of it from the Introit to the Offertory—takes place at the throne; the remaining portion takes place at the altar, but the Gospel of St. John is said by the bishop as he proceeds from the altar to the throne.

3. The bishop's vestments are placed upon the altar before Mass and put back upon it after the Mass. The bishop vests and unvests at the throne.

4. During the first portion of the Mass the deacon and sub-deacon of the Mass take their place at the usual bench on the Epistle side of the choir.

5. A seventh candlestick is placed upon the altar in line with the six other candlesticks. The seven candles symbolise the plenitude of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost which the bishop has received at his consecration, and which he communicates to the priests and the faithful in Holy Orders and in Confirmation.

D. Pontifical High Mass at the Faldstool

Q. *What are the main features of a Pontifical High Mass sung by a bishop who is not the Ordinary?*

A. 1. In addition to the deacon and sub-deacon of the Mass there is required an assistant priest—whose chief duty is to assist at the book (the Missal or the Canon).

2. The first portion of the Mass—from the Introit to the Offertory—takes place at the faldstool, which stands on a raised platform in front of the altar near the altar steps and towards the Epistle side.

3. The bishop vests and unvests at the faldstool—the vestments being placed upon the altar before Mass and put back upon it after Mass.

E. Papal Pontifical Mass

Q. *What is the derivation of the word "pontifical"?*

A. It comes from the Latin *pontifex*, meaning a High Priest.

Q. *What are the most striking ceremonies of a Papal Pontifical Mass?*

A. 1. The Epistle and Gospel are sung both in Latin and in Greek to emphasise the universality of the Church and of the sway of the Sovereign Pontiff.

2. Three hosts are brought to the altar at the Offertory, two of which are eaten by the Sacristan

there and then in view of the Pope to ensure the soundness of the Host used at the Mass. The Sacristan likewise tastes the wine.

3. When the Pope raises the Sacred Host at the Consecration he moves it in a semi-circle from left to right. And so with the chalice.

4. The Pope receives Holy Communion at the throne and not at the altar. The Sacred Species are brought to the throne where the Pope awaits them kneeling. He consumes one portion of the Sacred Host and the other portion, divided into two, he gives to the Cardinal-Deacon and Cardinal-Sub-deacon of the Mass. He partakes of a portion of the Precious Blood through a golden reed, and what remains is consumed by the Cardinal-Deacon and Cardinal-Sub-deacon (*cf.* Brors).

Chapter XVI

MASS OF THE DEAD

(*or Missa de Requiem*)

Q. *How many formularies are assigned for a "Requiem Mass"?*

A. Four formularies are assigned in the Missal, apart from the two extra Masses for All Souls' Day, which differ from the second and fourth of these formularies only in the Collect, Secret and Post-communion.

Q. *Enumerate these four formularies.*

A. 1. The first Mass assigned for the Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed (2nd November).

2. The Mass said on the Day of Death (or Burial). [With altered Collect, Secret and Post-communion, this Mass is proper to certain privileged days, viz., the 3rd, 7th and 30th day after death. The religious service of the 30th day after death or burial is called the "Month's Mind."]

3. An Anniversary Mass, which is also privileged.

4. The *Missa Quotidiana* (or Common Mass).

Q. *What is common to all four formularies?*

A. The chants are common—that is, the Introit, the Gradual and Tract, the Offertory and *Communio*; the Sequence (which is optional in the case of a private *Missa Quotidiana*); the special Preface for the Dead.

Q. *What is the Sequence of the Mass of the Dead?*

A. The *Dies Iræ*, "a pearl of ecclesiastical song." Its authorship is assigned to a Franciscan, Thomas de Celano, the biographer of St. Francis d'Assisi. This

sequence was first used in the Mass of the First Sunday of Advent—the Gospel of which treats of the Last Judgment. The last two verses of the *Dies Iræ* did not form part of the primitive text.

The *Dies Iræ* is at once terrible and touching, filling us with dread of God's judgment and melting us to pity for the soul brought to judgment. The music, to which it is set, like all the music of the Requiem Mass, is admirably wedded to the text—"the note is the soul of the word."

Q. *How does the Church in the Preface of the Mass for the Dead regard death?*

The Church regards death as the entrance to a happy eternity. The words the Church uses rob death of its sting and encourage us to face death with confident hope. "In Whom (Christ Our Lord) the hope of a blessed resurrection is shown to us, that they who are saddened by the certain necessity of dying be comforted by the promise of eternal life to come. For the life of Thy faithful, O Lord, is changed, not destroyed, and when the home of this earthly life is dissolved an everlasting dwelling in heaven shall be gained" (cf. 2 Cor. v. 1).

Q. *Why is there special privilege attached to the 3rd, 7th and 30th day after Death or Burial?*

A. Those days are treated as privileged mainly for mystical reasons, and not because Mass said on those days is more efficacious than Mass said on other days.

Q. *What mystical reasons are assigned?*

A. The third day is chosen because it was on the third day that Our Divine Lord arose from the tomb, glorious and immortal.

The seventh day is chosen because the seventh day is the day of rest; and the Mass suggests the petition that on that day—the day of rest—the soul may enter

upon its eternal rest in the Lord. Historically, it may be accounted for by the example of the sons of Jacob, who " in celebrating the exequies (of their father) . . . . spent full seven days " (Genesis l. 10).

The thirtieth day is chosen because for thirty days all Israel mourned the death of Aaron and of Moses.

Q. *What is the object of the Anniversary Mass ?*

A. To keep alive the memory of the deceased that suffrages may continually be offered up for his soul.

Q. *When is the Missa Quotidiana (or Common Mass) said?*

A. It is said, the rubrics permitting, on all days that are not privileged.

Q. *In what particulars does the Mass for the Dead differ from the ordinary formulary of the Mass ?*

A. The Dead Mass omits :—

A. 1. *All words and ceremonies expressive of joy.* Hence, the omission of the *Judica* psalm, of the *Gloria Patri,* the *Gloria in excelsis,* and the *Alleluia.*

2. *All words and ceremonies indicative of a festive celebration.* Hence, in the Solemn Requiem Mass there is no incensation of the altar at the Introit, no incensation of the Gospel book, no incensation of the deacon, sub-deacon, choir or people at the Offertory ; no lights are carried at the singing of the Gospel ; no kiss of peace is given. And common to the Solemn Requiem Mass, and Low Mass, are the omission of the kissing of the Missal or Gospel book at the Gospel ; of the kissing of the hand of the celebrant when objects are presented to, or received from him : the omission of the *Credo,* of the prayer for peace after the *Agnus Dei,* and the substitution of the " *Requiescant in pace* " for the *Ite, Missa est.*

3. *All words and ceremonies which indicate the participation of the living in the fruits of the Mass.* Hence, the celebrant does not make the sign of the Cross on

himself at the Introit. He makes the sign of the Cross over the Missal instead. The deacon and sub-deacon are not blessed in the Solemn Requiem Mass; the blessing of the water at the Offertory is omitted; the *Miserere Nobis* of the *Agnus Dei* gives way to *dona eis requiem* (give them rest), and the *dona nobis pacem* is changed to *dona eis requiem sempiternam* (give them rest everlasting). The blessing at the end of the Mass is omitted (*cf.* Schüch-Polz).

Q. *In what respect is the "Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed" (All Souls' Day) most specially favoured?*

A. On that day, as on Christmas Day, every priest may say three Masses. Each Mass enjoys the indulgence of a privileged altar.

Q. *When was this signal favour granted?*

A. In 1917, by Pope Benedict XV, during the great World War, out of his tender love of the souls of the thousands upon thousands that were slain.

Q. *What is the Exequial Mass?*

A. The Exequial Mass is the Mass said on the occasion of the funeral service.

Q. *What does the word "exequial" denote?*

A. It is from the Latin, *exequiæ* (=*exsequiæ*)—*exsequi*, to execute, to carry on to the end—and denotes the Christian service for the Dead, because it is the completion of the task of the Church, "the carrying out to the end" of its service of love (Latin, *obsequia*) to men.

The term "*Exsequiæ*" is also said to signify that the whole Church, with the community, *follows* (*exsequitur*) the soul of the deceased to the judgment seat, and follows the body to its resting place. (Amb.)

Q. *What is to be noted in the Collect of the Mass for the Day of Death (or Burial), in the Offertory of the Dead Mass and in the Absolution?*

A. In the Collect we pray that—"Thou (God) would'st not deliver (him or her) into the hands of the enemy."

In the Offertory Jesus is invoked to deliver the souls of the faithful departed "from the pains of hell" and "from the deep pit"; "from the lion's mouth that hell may not swallow them up."

And in the "*Libera*" of the Absolution occur the words "Deliver me, O Lord, from everlasting death."

Q. *Since those words and phrases cannot be interpreted as referring to the hell of the damned to which a soul may have been consigned in the particular judgment—for out of hell there is no redemption—in what sense must they be understood?*

A. By some these words and phrases are considered as referring to Purgatory, the fires of which, some of the Fathers held, were as fierce as those of hell itself.

Other authorities hold—and this second opinion is now more generally accepted—that in these prayers of the Church the soul of the deceased is regarded as having just left the body and about to be arraigned for the particular judgment. Before the prayers are said definite sentence has, of course, already been pronounced, but God foresaw the offering up of the prayers. They were present to His mind when judgment was, so to say, about to be pronounced. Through this foreknowledge of God the prayers of the Church produced their effect, exercised their power of intercession before their actual utterance. As effective—for it was foreseen by God—as if it was uttered at the very moment when the soul was summoned "before the throne" is the tender and piteous appeal:

"Judge of Justice hear my prayer;
Spare me, Lord, in mercy spare." (*Dies Iræ*).

Q. *What follows upon the Exequial Mass?*

A. The Absolution, the procession to the grave, and the ceremony of the actual burial.

Q. *What is the Absolution?*

A. The Absolution on the occasion of funeral service consists of a moving introductory prayer (*Non intres*, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord"), followed by the *Libera* ("Deliver me, O Lord, from everlasting death"), which preserves the form of the ancient response. The *Libera* is a consideration of the Last Day of which the presence of the dead body is a vivid reminder.

After the "*Libera*" comes the "*Kyrie, eleison*" and the "*Pater Noster*" (during which the coffin is aspersed and incensed). Then follow Versicles and Responses and a prayer for the deceased.

Q. *How does the term "Absolution" come to be applied to this ceremony?*

A. Some suggest that the name "Absolution" is derived from the first word of the prayer, "*Absolve, quæsumus, Domine*" (Absolve, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the soul of Thy servant).

Others suggest that it is due to a rite of absolution which consisted of a declaration that the deceased person had died "with the sign of faith" and was worthy of Christian burial or to an actual absolution from censures which the deceased had incurred.

Q. *How does the Burial Service conclude?*

A. With an antiphon of surpassing beauty,* "*In*

* The *In Paradisum* and the *Chorus Angelorum* (may the choir of angels) were originally two distinct antiphons—the former is found in the burial services of the 8th century, the latter was added on much later.

The *in tuo adventu* [substituted in the 10th century for an older *cum gaudio* or *gloria* (with joy or glory)] is best translated "in thy coming" (that is, in thy whole journey from earth to heaven)—both the angels and the martyrs being invited to accompany the soul from earth to the Heavenly Jerusalem (Cf. *Questions Liturgiques*, Sept., 1923).

Paradisum" ("may the angels lead thee to Paradise"), sung or recited while the coffin is being brought to the hearse after the Absolution.

At the graveside is recited (or sung) the antiphon "*Ego sum*" ("I am the Resurrection and the Life"), which is a confession of faith that one day the body will rise glorious from the tomb.

This antiphon is recited before and after the recitation of the "*Benedictus*," which, said at the graveside, is an expression on behalf of the Church of its thanksgiving to God for all the graces and favours bestowed upon the deceased, who was born of her bosom in baptism, and over whom it watched with a mother's care in every phase and circumstance of life.

Versicles and Responses follow the repetition of the *Ego sum* and lead up to a prayer for the deceased.

The solemn and moving ceremony closes with the recitation of the "*De Profundis*" for all the faithful departed to draw closer the bonds that unite us with the Church Suffering and make more vivid our belief in the Communion of Saints (*cf.* Eisenhofen).

Q. *What is understood by the term "Gregorian Masses"?*

A. They are a series of thirty Masses offered up on consecutive days that through the merits and intercession of Pope St. Gregory the Great the soul of a deceased person may be released from Purgatory.

Q. *What is the origin of the practice?*

A. It is said to have been revealed that, as the result of St. Gregory's offering up Holy Mass for thirty days consecutively for a deceased lay-brother, the soul of the lay-brother was released from Purgatory after the thirtieth Mass.

Chapter XVII

SACRED MUSIC*

Q. *What is Sacred Music?*

A. Sacred Music is of three kinds, viz.: Liturgical Music, Extra-Liturgical Music, and Religious Music.

Q. *What is Liturgical Music?*

A. Liturgical Music is music which has for its text words taken from the Missal or Breviary, and which is intended to be sung as an integral part of the Mass or Divine Office.

Q. *What is Extra-Liturgical Music?*

A. Extra-Liturgical Music is music which has for its text words of a sacred character, and which is intended for functions other than the Mass or Divine Office, viz.: Processions and Devotions.

Q. *What is Religious Music?*

A. Religious Music is music which has for its text words of a sacred character, but which was written merely as a work of art, without reference to any religious function, e.g. Handel's "Messiah."

Q. *Has the Church constituted music an integral part of her Solemn Liturgy?*

A. The Church has assigned to music "the first place amongst those things which are most closely connected with the Sacred Liturgy, and increase its splendour and efficacy. We know by common experience that

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it add ssolemnity to Divine worship, and in a wonderful way turns our thoughts to heavenly things. Consequently, the Church has in all ages recommended the use of Sacred Music and has taken great care to maintain its primeval dignity." (Preface to the Vatican edition of the *Gradual.*)

Q. *What qualities should Liturgical Music possess?*

A. "In order that Liturgical Music may attain its purpose, it should possess those qualities in virtue of which alone it can be regarded as sacred, and of service to souls. Its style should be one of religious gravity: suave, yet true to its purpose; catholic, that is, adequate to the needs of all peoples, all countries and all ages; and combining simplicity with artistic perfection." (*Ibid.*)

Q. *Where are those special qualities of style to be found?*

A. "These special qualities are to be found in their highest degree in Gregorian Chant, which the Church regards as her own special chant, and the supreme model of Sacred Music; and which she wishes to restore to popular use." (*Motu Proprio* on Sacred Music.)

Q. *Does the Church exclude from the Liturgy all music except Gregorian Chant?*

A. The Church does not wish to exclude from the Liturgy all music except Gregorian Chant. Besides Gregorian Chant she recommends the Classical Polyphony of the 16th century, and wishes to have it restored to use, wherever such restoration is possible. (*Ibid.*)

Q. *Does the Church discourage the use of modern music in Divine worship?*

A. The Church does not discourage the use of modern music in Divine worship. "Since, however, the development of modern music has been mainly secular in purpose and in effect, great care must be taken that

compositions in modern style which are admitted into the Church are not in any way profane, and do not contain melodies used in the theatre." (*Ibid.*)

Q. *May any piece of music which is reverent and devotional in character be sung during liturgical functions?*

A. Not all music which is reverent and devotional may be sung during liturgical functions, but only such music as is choral in form.

Q. *Is solo singing, then, wholly excluded?*

A. "Solo singing is not wholly excluded, but it should not predominate in any piece to such a degree that the greater part of the liturgical text is sung as a solo." (*Ibid.*)

Q. *May we regard as suitable any piece of choral music which is artistic and devotional?*

A. We may regard as suitable any piece of choral music which is artistic and devotional, provided it presents the liturgical text in Latin, "without changes, omissions or undue repetitions." (*Ibid.*)

Q. *Is it forbidden to sing in any language but Latin?*

A. "Latin is the official language of the Church of Rome, and singing in the vernacular at solemn functions is forbidden." (*Ibid.*)

Q. *Is it forbidden to sing anything except the liturgical text in Latin?*

A. "The texts which may be sung have been determined by the Church for every liturgical function, and it is forbidden to make any changes or omissions . . . According to custom, however, a motet in honour of the Blessed Sacrament may be sung after the Benedictus at a High Mass; and after the Offertory has been sung, the choir may sing a short motet, the text of which has been approved by the Church." (*Ibid.*)

Q. *Do those rules apply to Extra-Liturgical Music?*

A. Those rules do not apply to Extra-Liturgical

Music. They are meant to determine the nature of Liturgical Music only; but they serve as a guide to indicate the kind of music which the Church desires in all functions.

Q. *Does the Church allow any other music except vocal music in Sacred Functions?*

A. "It is the wish of the Church that Liturgical Music be purely vocal; however, she allows the voices to be accompanied by the organ; and in some special cases, by other wind instruments, but for this the leave of the bishop must be obtained." (*Ibid.*)

Q. *What instruments are forbidden in church?*

A. The playing of a band in the church is strictly forbidden, as is also the playing of the pianoforte, and of instruments which are either noisy or frivolous, e.g., drums, cymbals, bells, and all such.

Q. *What is the attitude of the Church to Religious Music?*

A. The Church has always encouraged the use of Religious Music, and under her patronage this form of sacred art made its appearance and attained its full development. She has not, however, given any instructions regarding its nature or use.

APPENDIX

Ceremonies to be Observed by the Faithful during Mass

1

Low Mass.

The General Rubrics of the Missal (xvii. 2) prescribe that those who assist at Low Mass should remain kneeling all the time except while the first and last

Gospels are being recited. Most authors regard this rubric only as of counsel in respect of the faithful and as binding in respect of the clergy present in choir in choral dress. The faithful should conform themselves to established customs.

Custom in many places sanctions standing during the *Credo* (with genuflection at the words "*Et incarnatus*") and sitting from the *Offertory* to the *Sanctus*.

II

Solemn High Mass.

No distinct regulations for the faithful have been laid down by the General Rubrics, but when clerics are in choir it would be best for the faithful to rise, sit, stand, and kneel with those in choir (*cf.*, Cær. I, v. 7).

A slight modification of the ceremonies prescribed for those in choir (xvii. 5, 7) may be recommended :—

In general—

Stand whenever the celebrant sings.

Sit whenever the celebrant sits.

In detail—

1. *Kneel* at the Confiteor and its Psalm.
   Kneel from the *Sanctus* to the end of the Elevation.
   Kneel for the Blessing.

2. *Sit* when the celebrant ascends the altar and until he intones the *Gloria in excelsis* or sings the *Dominus vobiscum* (if there be no *Gloria*). During this interval, however, it would be more in accordance with the rubrics to *stand* while the Celebrant is actually reciting the *Introit* and the *Kyrie* (*cf.* D. 3631, 1).

Sit from the beginning of the Epistle sung by the sub-deacon until the beginning of the Gospel sung by the deacon. Don't rise when the Celebrant begins to read the Gospel.

Sit from the Offertory to the Preface (but *stand* while the congregation is being incensed).

Sit while the Communion Antiphon is being sung.

3. *Stand* while the first Gospel is being sung, and while the last Gospel is being recited.

Stand from the end of the Elevation to the consumption of the Precious Blood (or as is the practice in many places—*stand* from the end of the Elevation to the *Agnus Dei*, and *kneel* from the *Agnus Dei* to the consumption of the Precious Blood).

Stand while the sacred ministers are proceeding to and from the altar.

III

In Solemn Requiem Mass.

Kneel while the celebrant sings the Collect and Postcommunion.

Kneel from the *Sanctus* to the *Pax Domini* inclusive, and stand from the *Pax Domini* to the consumption of the Precious Blood [or as an alternative practice, kneel from the *Sanctus* to the consumption of the Precious Blood].

Section III

THE LITURGICAL YEAR

Chapter XVIII

THE LITURGICAL YEAR

Q. *What is the liturgical year?*

A. The liturgical year is the annual celebration of the mysteries of man's salvation and of the memory of the saints.

Q. *Is the annual celebration of the mysteries of Our Lord to be regarded as merely a pious commemoration of them?*

A. The annual celebration of the mysteries of Christ is not a mere memorial of the past. The mystery that is being celebrated is a fact having the character of an event which is actually taking place, and in which the Church really participates. Christ lives in the Church for ever. Every truth of Christ, every miracle, every event of His life that is celebrated in the liturgy is a manifestation of the Living Christ. The Church lives over again the mysteries of Christ in the course of the liturgical year, and so in the liturgy we all become contemporaries of Christ Our Lord. What happened once is ever recurrent; the past becomes the immediate present. The Divine Infant is as near to us in the Holy Mass of Christmas as He was to the shepherds who, at the bidding of the Angels, went to adore Him. Our adoration is but a prolongation of theirs, and the

special graces vouchsafed to them at the manger of Bethlehem are stored up for our souls in the Christmas Mass. Christ was born in the souls of the shepherds the first Christmas. As truly is He born in our souls every successive Christmas Day.

Q. *Has each mystery that is celebrated its special grace?*

A. In each stage and in each mystery of His life Christ acquired for us special graces—distinct graces acquired in His Infancy, in His hidden life, in His public life, in His sufferings and His death, in His Resurrection and His glorious Ascension, and in His sending of the Holy Ghost.

Q. *What is regarded as the special qualities of these distinct graces?*

A. Christmas brings with it the spirit of childlike love and gladness. Epiphany awakens in us the spirit of reverent homage to our King and the spirit of zeal for the spread of His kingdom. The spirit of steadfast courage in our struggle against Satan is awakened in the first weeks of Lent and the spirit of patience and of suffering and the horror of sin come to us in Passiontide. At Easter the joy of victory over the enemies of our salvation floods the soul, while on the Feast of the Ascension we lift up our thoughts to heavenly things to be, by faith, like Christ, in the bosom of the Father. The Descent of the Holy Ghost endues us with power from on high and gives the spirit of fortitude which enables us to await with eager gladness the second coming of Our Lord in judgment.

Q. *What great truth will, above all, spur us on to direct our devotion after the plan of the liturgical year and so enter into the mind of the Church?*

A. The deep-seated conviction that Christ's mysteries are ours, that the interior life of the Christian is a

reproduction of the life of Jesus. When we endure suffering patiently it is Christ within us who suffers, when we love our brethren it is Christ within us Who loves them. "And I live, now not I: but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20).

Q. *In what sense are Christ's mysteries ours?*

A. We all sinned in Adam, the head of the human race. We all died to sin with Christ, Who is the Head of the Mystical Body of which we are the members:

"We are buried together with Him" (Rom. vi. 4).

"If we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall live also with Christ" (Rom. vi. 8).

The Eternal Father sees us, likewise, in all the other mysteries of Christ. God "hath raised up together and hath made us sit together in the heavenly places, through Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 6), for "where the Head is seated, the body is also seated along with the Head" (St. John Chrysostom)—some members in realisation, others in hope. Christ's Death is our death (to sin), Christ's Resurrection is our resurrection (to newness of life). Christ's glorious Ascension is our glorification (hereafter) (*cf.* Marmion).

The satisfactions offered by Christ, the merits won by Him, the glory achieved by Him in His mysteries are ours, to each according to the measure of the giving of Christ (Eph. iv. 7) and according to his dispositions and degree of co-operation (Council of Trent—Sess. vi, Cap. vii.).

Q. *What is the all-important element in each liturgical celebration?*

A. The Mass is the pith and marrow of each recurring festival. It is from the altar that the mystery is read to us. "In each mystery Our Holy Mother the Church shows us the fruit to be gathered from it—a virtue to be acquired, a grace to be sought, a sacrifice

to be made which must be united to the one great sacrifice of the Altar." It is in the Mass that we appropriate the mystery to ourselves, that we communicate in it, that we live it over again.

Q. *Apart from the Mass how else may we celebrate the Church's year in the spirit of the Church?*

A. In our visits to the Blessed Sacrament it would be advisable to adore Jesus in that stage of His life or in that particular mystery the current liturgical season presents to us. At Christmas, for instance, it would be the spirit of the Church to adore Jesus as the Divine Infant; in Lent, as suffering and dying on the Cross; at Easter, as risen gloriously from the dead.

Q. *Does the Church emphasise specially the fruit to be derived from the observation of the current festival of the ecclesiastical year?*

A. The interesting Collect of Wednesday of Easter week states for us the mind of the Church.

"O God, Who dost gladden us with the yearly celebration of Our Lord's Resurrection, mercifully grant that by those festivals which we keep in life we may become worthy to attain to eternal joys hereafter."

Compare the Collect of the following Saturday.

"Grant that we who have celebrated the Easter festival may deserve by it to arrive at eternal joys."

Q. *How did Pope Pius X of saintly memory regard the observance of the liturgical feasts?*

A. He states that the liturgical feasts were introduced that all might render to God the supreme worship of adoration in common. In these feasts all is so arranged and every single circumstance so adapted as to make the mysteries, the truths or the deeds which are celebrated penetrate deeply into the soul and move the soul to corresponding acts of virtue. The faithful, if

well instructed, and if minded to celebrate the feasts in the spirit of the Church, would obtain a renewal and a notable increase of faith, of devotion and of religious knowledge, and in consequence the whole life of Christians would be reinvigorated and transformed.

Q. *When does the liturgical year begin?*

A. The liturgical year begins with the First Sunday of Advent, the Sunday that falls nearer to the Feast of St. Andrew (30th November).

Q. *Did this rule always hold?*

A. No; the present practice dates only from the 16th century. For several centuries the beginning of the year varied. For a long time it coincided with the beginning of the civil year. In the 5th century it began with the Feast of Easter. Later it dated from some other great feast, e.g. the Feast of the Annunciation (25th March), the Feast of the Nativity (25th December). Up to 1908 the Apostolic chancery began the year officially with the Feast of the Nativity.

Q. *How did the liturgical year as such develop in the worship of the Church?*

A. The name "liturgical year" is of comparatively recent date, but the thing itself developed gradually from the 4th century with the multiplication of the Feasts of Our Lord, while the basis on which it rests is of Apostolic origin.

Q. *Trace in broad outline the gradual development of the liturgical year.*

A. The liturgical year began in Apostolic times with the establishment of the Sunday as the Christian day of prayer and of rest, and with the annual celebration of the Pasch or Easter festival of which the Sunday was in part a weekly celebration. Easter is the first Christian feast in order of time and of importance, the "solemnity of solemnities," the sun of the liturgical

cycle. The Feast of Pentecost, which was inherited like Easter, from the Jewish ritual and to which, as to Easter, a full and perfect Christian signification was given, was well established by the 3rd century, while mention of the Feast of the Ascension is first found in the 4th century. The whole fifty days from Easter to Pentecost are a prolongation of the Paschal joys.

Q. *What are the further stages of this development?*

A. The establishment of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord in the 4th century, the adoption of the Feast of the Epiphany from the Eastern Church in the 5th century, the institution of a prolonged term of preparation for both the Easter and the Christmas festivals in the course of the 5th and 6th centuries—Easter and Christmas serving as the poles of the liturgical year.

In modern times a third cycle, that of Pentecost, has been formed, but it is not based upon historical grounds. The Sundays after Pentecost do not centre round any mystery of Our Lord that would give them common characteristics.

Q. *What of the development of the feasts of the saints?*

A. The celebration of feasts of the martyrs followed quickly upon the cessation of the persecutions and the feasts of confessors were added after a century or so. Feasts in honour of Our Blessed Lady formed a regular feature of the liturgy in the 6th and 7th centuries. In course of time feasts of angels and saints were multiplied and the list of the saints is extended by successive canonisations.

Q. *What is the purpose of celebrating throughout the liturgical year Feasts of Our Lady, of the Angels and of the Saints?*

A. To help us to realise the doctrine of the communion of saints, to secure for us the aid of powerful intercessors in heaven, to inspire us to follow the example

of those to whom Jesus was in very deed the way, the truth and the life—"grant that by *his help* and *his example* we may so fight on earth as to become worthy to be crowned with him in heaven" (Collect of the Mass of St. Ignatius, 31st July). Through them we learn to know Jesus Who was their model. "Grant, O Lord, that in the spirit of Paul the Apostle we may learn the knowledge of Jesus, which surpasseth all understanding" (Collect of the Feast of St. Anthony Maria Zaccaria, 5th July). Whether we celebrate mysteries or saints in the liturgy it is the thought of Jesus that is the central thought of all.

Q. *What great ideal then does devotion to the liturgical year most directly aim at?*

A. To make us "feel with the Church," to think as the Church thinks, to act as the Church would have us act. To make us all one with Christ, so that there may be in us "this mind . . . which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philipp. ii. 5).

Chapter XIX

THE CHRISTIAN WEEK

Q. *What was the Sabbath Day for the early Christians?*

A. In the beginning it was the Sabbath Day of the Jewish Synagogue—the Sabbath Day they were accustomed to observe before the introduction of the Christian religion. But as, after the Jewish observance of prayer at eventide, the Christians celebrated in private houses the Eucharistic reunion or synaxis which lasted till early morning, Sunday, the first day of the week, came to be regarded as the day of special prayer and, later on, as the day of Sabbath rest. Sunday, thus, became the great liturgical day, and all the more naturally because it was then observed—as now, to some extent—as a weekly commemoration of the great mystery of the Resurrection.

Q. *What further outstanding events led to the adoption of Sunday as the day of the Christian Sabbath?*

A. It was on the first day of the week that creation began, with the creation of light, and it was on the first day of the week that the Holy Ghost came upon earth with the sound of a mighty wind and in the form of tongues of fire.

Q. *What character has been impressed on the liturgy of the Sunday?*

A. As on Sunday took place the works appropriated to the Three Divine Persons, Sundays are regarded as, in a special manner, dedicated to the Blessed Trinity. The Preface of the Blessed Trinity, e.g. is proper to Sundays, except to the Sundays of Lent and Eastertide.

Q. *What elements does the Sunday still possess of its being a weekly commemoration of the Resurrection?*

A. The Alleluia of the antiphons of the Sunday Office throughout the year; the absence of the fast and of penitential ceremonial practices, e.g. *Flectamus genua*, the genuflection before the recitation of prayers. *Cf.*, the practice of standing while reciting the Angelus on Sundays.

Q. *What other days of the week were signalled out for special religious exercises?*

A. Wednesday, the day on which Judas betrayed Our Divine Lord, and Friday, the day on which Our Divine Lord died, were observed as days of prayer and fasting. Saturday was added on as a prolongation of the Friday fast: these became, with Sunday, the great Station days.

Q. *What remnants of this early practice still survive?*

A. The abstinence of Friday and the three fast days of Quarter Tense.

Q. *What names were given to the days of the week?*

A. Sunday was called the Lord's Day (*Dies Dominica*). Saturday retained its Jewish appellation (*Sabbatum*), the remaining days were called ferials (*feriæ*), and as Sunday, in the Jewish system of calculation was regarded as the first ferial after the Sabbath, Monday remained the second ferial (*feriæ secunda*), Tuesday the third ferial (*feria tertia*), etc. *Feria* (ferial) is a tranlation of the Hebrew, *Sabbatum* (rest).

Chapter XX

QUARTER TENSE

Q. *How is the term Quarter Tense derived ?*

A. Quarter Tense is a corruption of Quater-temps from quater (four) + temps (time), Quarter Tense being a fast of three days (Wednesday, Friday and Saturday) at the beginning of the four seasons of the year.

Q. *By what other name are these fast days known ?*

A. They are known also as Ember days, ember being derived from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning a regularly recurring time, period or season.

Q. *When do these fasts occur ?*

A. They begin on the Wednesday of the first week in Lent, on the Wednesday after Pentecost Sunday, on the Wednesday after the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (14th September), on the Wednesday after the Feast of St. Lucy (13th December), or as the old mnemonic has it :

Post crux, post lux,
Post ignes, post cineres.

Crux standing for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross ; *lux* standing for St. Lucy ; *ignes* (fire) standing for the Feast of the Coming of the Holy Ghost, Pentecost Sunday ; *cineres* (ashes) standing for Ash Wednesday.

Q. *When did the Quarter Tense first originate ?*

A. St. Leo I (A.D. 461) testifies to the existence of three fast days in the 4th, 7th, and 10th months of the year (corresponding to our June, September and December), which were well established in his time, that is,

in the 5th century. Pope Gelasius I (A.D. 496) introduced the Quarter Tense of spring, which Pope St. Gregory VII (A.D. 1085) definitely fixed for the first week in Lent.

Q. For what purpose was this special periodic fast introduced?

A. This is a much-disputed question. It is held that the first three in order of institution constitute a Christian adaptation of the pagan *feriæ* of the time of sowing the seed, of the harvest and of the vintage respectively. But it would rather seem that the fast of Pentecost marked the solemn resumption of the stational fast interrupted by the Paschal Season; the fast of December was a fast instituted in opposition to the pagan fasts of the Saturnalia, which lasted from 17th to 23rd December, as well as being an end-of-the-year fast; the fast of September was a Christian adaptation of the annual fast of the Jews in the month of Tishri, while the spring Quarter Tense is due to the Saturday of that week being, with the other Saturdays of Quarter Tense, chosen as an official Ordination day (cf. *La Vie et les Arts Liturgiques*, 1922).

Q. What is noticeable in the Masses of the days of Quarter Tense?

A. The Wednesday Masses preserve the old custom of having two Lessons before the Gospel.

The Friday Masses of later origin have but one Lesson before the Gospel.

The Saturday Mass has six Lessons before the Gospel (the fifth Lesson in every case being taken from Daniel III, which narrates the story of the three youths in the fiery furnace).

The fifth Lesson is followed by the canticle of the three youths, the text of which is not quite identical with the text of the Vulgate. Each Ember Saturday

is called "Saturday of the Twelve Lessons," for the six Lessons of the Mass were sung both in Latin and in Greek, as the Lessons are still sung in the Papal Mass.

Q. *What does the Church expect of us during the Ember weeks?*

A. Besides the observance of the fast we should pray that the grace of God may be poured out abundantly upon the candidates for Ordination, who receive their respective Orders on the Saturday of Ember week, and that God may bless the earth with abundant crops.

Q. *Is there any general note struck in the Quarter Tense Masses?*

A. The Masses are entirely coloured by the Liturgical Season in which they occur, and are almost totally identified with it. In some of the Lessons reference is made to the first fruits of the harvest and to the crops the earth produces.

Q. *What departure from the ordinary ceremonies of the Mass is to be observed in Quarter Tense?*

A. On Wednesdays and Saturdays of Quarter Tense [and on Wednesday of Holy Week] the *Kyrie*, which is said as usual at the centre of the altar, is not followed immediately by the *Dominus vobiscum* (or the *Gloria in excelsis*). The celebrant, without kissing the altar, proceeds to the Epistle corner to recite the prayer which precedes the first Lesson and which, except in Pentecost Quarter Tense, is introduced by *Oremus*, *Flectamus genua* (Let us kneel) and *Levate* (Rise). He returns to the centre to say the *Dominus vobiscum* (or in Pentecost Quarter Tense the *Gloria in excelsis*) before the recitation of the Collect or prayers that immediately precede the Epistle of the Mass.

Chapter XXI

THE CHRISTMAS CYCLE

A. Advent

Q. *What is the meaning of Advent?*

A. Advent is a time of preparation for the coming (*adventus*) of Our Lord on Christmas Day.

Q. *When does Advent begin?*

A. The season of Advent begins, as we have seen, on the Sunday nearer to the Feast of St. Andrew (30th November).

Q. *What is the present duration of Advent?*

A. Four weeks; but the fourth week is often not completed through the 25th December falling on a week-day.

Q. *When was the season of Advent introduced into the Church?*

A. In the 6th century it was established in Rome, and by the 8th it was adopted throughout the whole Western Church.

Q. *What was its original duration?*

A. At first 8 or 10 days' preparation for Christmas Day was prescribed. This was extended to five or six weeks, and the growing desire to make it analagous with Lent suggested a period of fasting before the Christmas festival beginning on St. Martin's Day, 11th November. The present arrangement of four weeks' preparation has been adopted throughout the Western Church since the 11th century.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the four weeks?*

A. The four weeks symbolise the four thousand years during which mankind awaited the coming of the Messias.

Q. *Why is Advent chosen as the beginning of the year?*

A. Because the Birth of Christ is the first event of the Christian era. The Mystery of the Incarnation, which was manifested to the world in Bethlehem, is the central fact of human history—before the Incarnation all men looked forward to Christ's coming as the Messias; since the Incarnation all men await His second advent or coming on the day of General Judgment.

Q. *What is the character of the Advent preparation?*

A. At first it was a season of joy. The note of joy is still observable in the retention of the Alleluiatic verse in the Mass, but under the influence of the monks the note of penance became predominant, and that note prevails.

Q. *How is the penitential character of Advent marked in the Church's liturgy?*

A. By the violet vestments used at Mass, by the substitution of folded chasubles for the dalmatic and tunic, by the omission of the *Gloria in excelsis* at Mass, by the prohibition of the playing of the organ and by the absence of flowers on the altars.

Q. *Is this note of penance ever varied in the Advent season?*

A. On the Third Sunday of Advent a joyous note is struck; it was originally the last Sunday before Christmas on which a Sunday Station Mass was sung, and hence the note of anticipatory and welcoming joy. In cathedral churches rose-coloured vestments are prescribed instead of violet. Flowers decorate the altar and the organ peals. The dalmatic and tunic are donned (*cf.*, the Fourth Sunday in Lent).

Q. *What are the prevailing thoughts of the Advent liturgy?*

A. The Mystery of the Incarnation, the thought of the second coming of Christ, for which all our life is a preparation, the remission of sin through penance to prepare the way of the Lord, and the longing for Christ to be spiritually born in our hearts on Christmas Day. This longing is at once an echo and a prolongation of the longing of the Patriarchs and Prophets for the coming of the Redeemer. The mystery of Christ's birth is renewed in our souls.

Q. *How does the Missal express these thoughts?*

A. Compare especially the Gospel of Wednesday and Friday of Quarter Tense; the Gospel of the first Sunday, the Gospel of the second, third and fourth Sundays, and the Collect of the first Sunday; the Collects of the second and third Sundays and the "O's." of Advent viz., the Antiphons of the Magnificat from the 17th to the 23rd December, in which is expressed a very ecstasy of longing that reaches its climax in the Introit of Christmas Eve.

Q. *What great examples are set before us during Advent.*

A. Isaias, the prophet of the Incarnation; St. John the Baptist, the Precursor of the Lord, and all through Advent the Mother of God is invoked, her Divine Maternity exalted, and her example set before us. The first part of the Hail Mary finds its first liturgical utterance in the Offertory of the Fourth Sunday of Advent (*cf.* Beauduin).

Q. *What great Feast of Our Blessed Lady occurs in the Advent season?*

A. The Feast of the Immaculate Conception, which, however, has no special relation to the Advent liturgy. The date of the feast has been determined by the Feast

of the Nativity of Our Blessed Lady on the 8th September, just as the date of the Annunciation has been determined by the date of Christmas. The thought of Mary's sinlessness, however, cannot but enforce the preaching of St. John the Baptist and incite us to prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus.

Q. *What is special to the Quarter Tense of Advent?*

A. For a long time the Ordination of priests and deacons was reserved to the Saturday of the December Quarter Tense. The service was held on the vigil and lasted well into the Sunday. And so it came to pass that on the Sunday—the 4th of Advent—no special Station was held, the Sunday being then a *Dominica vacans* (a vacant Sunday). The Ordination service, later on, was held not on Saturday night but on Saturday morning, and then a Station Mass was assigned to Sunday. The original identity between the Vigil Mass and the Sunday Mass is maintained in the identity of the Gospels in the present Masses of Saturday of December Quarter Tense and the Fourth Sunday of Advent (*cf.*, the Second Sunday in Lent).

B. The Feast of Christmas

Q. *When was the Feast of Christmas introduced?*

A. In the 4th century.

Q. *Why was the 25th December chosen for the feast?*

A. To counteract and destroy the influence of the pagan festival in honour of the "Unconquered Sun," held on the 25th December—the period of the winter solstice—by substituting for it the Christian festival in honour of the divine "Sun of Justice."

Q. *What is the most striking feature of the liturgy of Christmas Day?*

A. On that day every priest may celebrate three

Masses assigned respectively for midnight, dawn, and broad daylight.

Q. *What is the accepted symbolism of these three Masses?*

A. They are said to celebrate respectively the temporal birth of Our Lord (*cf.*, Collect, Gospel, Offertory), His spiritual birth in the hearts of the faithful (*cf.*, the Epistle, Collect, Secret, and Post-communion), the eternal birth of the Son of God in the bosom of the Father (*cf.*, Gospel and Offertory). But all three symbols may be traced in each of the three Masses. It would be more accurate to state that in the first Mass, Christ is honoured as the "Light of the world," in the second as the "Prince of Peace," and in the third as the "Son of God" and the "Bringer of the glad tidings of our adoption as sons."

Q. *What is the historical origin of these three Masses?*

A. At the Christmas vigil held at St. Mary Major's—where the relic of the manger of Bethlehem is preserved—Mass was celebrated, and, as we have seen, up to the 6th century it was only at this Mass that the *Gloria in excelsis* was sung. On the feast itself the regular Station Mass was said at St. Peter's (now at St. Mary Major's). These were the only Masses that referred to the festival. But Mass was also said by the Pope before the Station Mass at St. Peter's, in the Church of St. Anastasia, whose feast fell on the 25th December. The Church of St. Anastasia was paid this signal honour because it was the "Chapel Royal" of the Imperial family. This Mass at St Anastasia's, in course of time, became a festival Mass of Christmas, with commemoration of St. Anastasia. The privilege of saying three Masses spread beyond Rome and became universal by the 6th century.

Q. *What is the character of the Christmas feast?*

A. It is a festival full of joy. The longing of Advent is fulfilled ; Christ is born, and we adore Him with the shepherds at the manger. Christ is born in us and His Christmas gift is to warm our hearts with the spiritual gladness that suffused the heart of His Mother, Mary.

Q. *What is notable in the ceremonies of High Mass upon Christmas Day?*

A. The sacred ministers—and the congregation with them—kneel while the choir sing the *Et incarnatus* of the Nicene Creed. This ceremony takes place also on the Feast of the Annunciation. It is an act of homage to the adorable Mystery of the Incarnation.

Q. *How does the Preface of the Nativity express the purpose of the Christmas festival?*

A. "For by the mystery of the Word made flesh the light of Thy glory hath shone anew upon the eyes of our mind ; so that while we acknowledge Him a God seen by men, we may be drawn by Him to the love of things unseen."

Q. *What feasts follow immediately upon the Feast of the Nativity?*

A. The three feasts of the so-called companions of Christ—of St. Stephen the Protomartyr, martyr in will and in fact ; of St. John the Evangelist, martyr in will, and of the Holy Innocents, martyrs in fact.

Q. *What feast falls on the Octave of Christmas?*

A. The Feast of the Circumcision which opens the civil year when Our Lord, eight days after His birth, was, in accordance with Jewish law, enrolled among the children of Israel and when He received the name Jesus.

Q. *Is the Name of Jesus honoured by a special feast?*

A. The Feast of the Holy Name is celebrated on the Sunday, if such fall, between the 1st and the 6th of

January when not impeded by an Office of nobler rite ; if it be so impeded or if no Sunday intervene between the 1st and the 6th January, the Feast of the Holy Name is attached to the 2nd January. It is the desire of the Church that every Christian begin the year in the Name of Jesus.

C. The Epiphany (6th January)

Q. *What is the meaning of the word "Epiphany"?*

A. It comes from the Greek word, "*epiphania*," meaning manifestation.

Q. *What forms of manifestation are referred to on this feast?*

A. (*a*) The manifestation of Jesus to the three Magi, that is, the call of the Gentiles to the faith, the first fruits of which were Gaspar, Melchior and Balthasar, the three wise men or kings from the East. Of that call, we too, are the fruits.

(*b*) The manifestation of the Divinity of Jesus Christ made at His Baptism in the Jordan.

(*c*) The manifestation of His power made at the marriage feast of Cana, when He changed water into wine.

Q. *Are all three manifestations celebrated in the liturgy of the Epiphany?*

A. In the Missal the adoration of the Magi is commemorated, but in the Divine Office all three manifestations are celebrated in the antiphons of the *Benedictus* and *Magnificat*. So much prominence is given to the Magi that the feast is known as the "Feast of the Kings." The Baptism of Our Lord is the main theme of the Mass of the Octave of the Epiphany, while the marriage feast of Cana is the incident of the Gospel of the Second Sunday after the Epiphany.

Q. *What ideas are brought before us in the Mass of the Epiphany?*

A. In the Introit we hail Christ as our King, who comes with a kingdom in His hand and power and dominion, and in the Epistle the greatness of this power and the glory of this kingdom are sung. We are thus bidden to open our hearts that we may receive our King, adore Him as the Magi did, and bring Him the gifts of love, prayer, and penance symbolised by gold, incense and myrrh; and we pray in the Collect that He Who has manifested Himself to us by the gift of faith in baptism may manifest Himself to us in heaven in the beauty of His majesty (*cf.* Hammenstede).

Q. *What are the special graces of this feast?*

A. A spirit of reverent homage to Christ our King, an increase of faith in Jesus, which is tantamount to a new manifestation of Jesus to our soul, a love for the interests of the Church, and an ardent zeal for the propagation of the Kingdom of Christ in heathen lands. We share the longing of Jesus for souls and participate in His joy at the adoration of the Magi, in His joy at the triumph of the faith.

Q. *When was this feast introduced?*

A. This feast was adopted in the 4th century in Rome from the East where, from the 3rd century, it was celebrated as the birthday of Our Lord. The East in the 4th century, in its turn, adopting from the Western Church the Feast of Christmas on the 25th December, reserved for the 6th January the manifestation of the divinity of Jesus at His Baptism in the Jordan. The Vigil and Octave were celebrated in the 8th century.

Q. *What special ceremonial is attached to this feast?*

A. After the Gospel of the feast in cathedral churches

the date of Easter and other movable feasts is announced.

Q. *How is it classified as a feast?*

A. It is classified like Easter and Pentecost amongst the cardinal feasts, those feasts which have a series of Sundays connected with them.

Q. *How many Sundays are connected with the Epiphany?*

A. Six Sundays; but on account of an early incidence of Septuagesima Sunday—the beginning of the preparation of the feast of Easter—it often happens that one or more or all of the Sundays from the 3rd to the 6th are omitted and transferred till the Sunday or Sundays between the 23rd Sunday after Pentecost and the last Sunday of the Ecclesiastical Year.

Q. *Have those Sundays any special character?*

A. They may be said to manifest Christ in the acts of His public life, but they do not share the definite liturgical character of the Christmas Cycle, for they may be celebrated after Pentecost. This want of distinct character may be inferred from the peculiarity that many parts of those Masses are exactly the same for all four Sundays—the same Introit, Gradual, Offertory, and *Communio*.

Q. *What feast rounds off the Christmas Cycle?*

A. The Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary—known as Candlemas Day—which falls on the 2nd February, forty days after Christmas Day.

Q. *What does this feast commemorate?*

A. It commemorates the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the temple, and the meeting of Jesus with Simeon and Anna. From the latter incident the feast was known as the "*Occursus Domini*" (the meeting of the Lord)—

the name, in its Greek form "Hypapante," applied to it to this day in the Greek Church. (See Luke ii. 22–39.)

Q. *To which incident is greatest prominence given in the liturgy?*

A. The Presentation in the Temple. It is a feast rather of the Infant Jesus than of the Blessed Virgin Mary, being regarded as a new manifestation of Jesus in His entrance as Lord into His temple (*cf.*, the Epistle). The Preface of the Mass, moreover, is the Preface of the Nativity.

Q. *What is the origin of the Procession with Candles, that takes place this day?*

A. The idea was probably suggested by the words of Simeon, who spoke of Our Lord as "a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people of Israel." Others trace it to a desire to counteract the Lupercalia, the pagan festivals, in which the carrying of lights was a leading feature.

Q. *When was the feast introduced in Rome?*

A. The feast, which had its origin in Jerusalem in the 4th century, was introduced into the Roman Church in the 6th century. The carrying of lights was introduced in the Western Church in the 8th century, while the formula of the Blessing of Candles dates from the 10th century.

Q. *What ideas are expressed in the prayers of blessing?*

A. God is invoked to bless and hallow the candles for the service of man and for the health of their bodies on land and sea—the candles being, then, sacramentals.

The symbolism of fire and light is developed in praying that "being worthily inflamed with the holy fire of Thy most sweet charity, we may deserve to be presented in the holy temple of Thy glory," and "that our hearts . . . illumined by the brightness of the Holy Spirit may be free from the blindness of every vice."

Q. *What is signified by the distribution of the candles?*

A. That we all have a share in the grace of Christ, Who is the "light of the world."

Q. *During what parts of the ceremony are the lighted candles held in the hand?*

A. During the procession, at the singing of the Gospel, and from the Consecration to the Communion; but if the Mass be of the Sunday, the candles are not lighted during the Mass.

Q. *How does it happen that the Mass may be of the Sunday?*

A. Whenever Easter falls before the 5th April, the 2nd February falls within the Septuagesimal period (the Christmas Cycle, as to its concluding day, thus overlapping the Paschal Cycle). Should it fall upon a Sunday within that period, the Sunday Mass would have precedence, and the Mass of the Purification would have to be transferred to another day. The Blessing of the Candles is proper to the 2nd February.

Q. *What is the nature of the procession?*

A. It is penitential in character, as shewn by the wearing of violet vestments, while white vestments are used at the Mass of the Purification.

Q. *What is specially to be remarked on the antiphons sung during the procession?*

A. The first antiphon is of Greek origin, while the music of all three is not Gregorian in character.

Q. *What should be the special duty of the faithful on this Candlemas Day?*

A. The faithful should make it a practice to procure a blessed candle on this day, to keep it, and to light it during the death agony of any member of the household, or whenever the Communion of the sick or the last rites of the Church are administered in their homes.

Chapter XXII

THE PASCHAL CYCLE

Q. *What is the Paschal Cycle?*

A. The Paschal Cycle is that portion of the liturgical year which extends from Septuagesima to the close of the Octave of Pentecost.

Q. *To what does the Paschal Cycle owe its transcending importance?*

A. The Paschal Cycle, which is the pivot of the liturgical year, owes its importance to the fact that it centres round the Easter festival, the solemnity of solemnities, the feast of feasts, which celebrates the mystery of the Resurrection of Our Saviour, the central mystery of the liturgy, the basic truth of the Christian faith.

Q. *Into what periods may the Paschal Cycle be subdivided?*

A. Into three, viz. :—

1. The Septuagesimal period, from Sunday in Septuagesima to Ash Wednesday.
2. The season of Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.
3. The season of Easter, from Easter Sunday to the close of the Octave of Pentecost.

A.—The Septuagesimal Period

Q. *What is the general character of the Septuagesimal period?*

A. It is essentially a time of preparation for Lent

calculated to attune the mind to the deep earnestness and austerity of the Lenten season.

Q. *What are the leading ideas evolved in the liturgy of this period?*

A. *Septuagesima* Sunday reminds us of sin and its consequences. The Lessons of the Divine Office begin with the Book of Genesis, the story of man's fall, while the Gospel of the Mass reminds us that, if we are to obtain a heavenly reward, we must not remain idle, we must work in the vineyard of the Lord to which we have been called of God's free will.

Sexagesima teaches the necessity of suffering (Epistle) and of keeping the word of God (Gospel) if our work is to bring forth fruits worthy of penance.

Quinquagesima points out the dispositions necessary for carrying out God's work in its analysis of true charity (Epistle) and in stressing the need of unbounded confidence in God (Gospel).

Q. *What are the liturgical characteristics of this preparatory period?*

A. Violet vestments are prescribed and the *Gloria in excelsis* (and the *Te Deum* in the Divine Office) omitted in Masses of the period.

The Alleluia is dropped after the twofold repetition of it which is joined on to the *Benedicamus Domino* of Vespers of the Saturday before Septuagesima Sunday. It is not sounded in the liturgy again until the close of the Epistle of the Holy Saturday Mass. In the Missal the place of the Alleluiatic verse is taken by the Tract and in certain ferial Masses of Lent is left unoccupied.

Q. *How are the names "Dominica in Septuagesima," "in Sexagesima," "in Quinquagesima" accounted for?*

A. Those names are formed in analogy with the Latin name for Lent—*Quadragesima*.

Quadragesima means the fortieth day (that is before the Pasch). By a figure of speech the name *Quadragesima* was given to the whole period of forty days devoted to the sorrowful preparation for the Christian Pasch. Sundays in Lent were (and are still) called *Dominica prima, secunda, in Quadragesima*—the first, the second . . . Sunday *in* the period of forty days before the Pasch. For various reasons churches, e.g. the Church of Rome and the Church of Jerusalem, differed as to the time when the Lenten season should begin. By some the Lenten preparation began with the Sunday before our First Sunday in Lent, and that Sunday became *Dominica in Quinquagesima* (Sunday within the period of fifty days' preparation for the Pasch). A further shifting forward led to *Dominica in Sexagesima* (or the period of sixty days), and a further still to *Dominica in Septuagesima* (Sunday within the period of seventy days)—fifty, sixty and seventy being used as round numbers (*cf.* Thurston).

Others find in the *Septuagesima* an analogy to the seventy years' captivity which the Israelites had to endure in penance for their sins.

Q. *What circumstances may be cited as leading to the divergence of practice as to the opening of Lent?*

A. The Latin Church fasted six days in the week—Sunday being not a fast day on account of its relation to the Resurrection.

The Greek Church fasted only five days—Saturday and Sunday being both excluded. In the Greek Church it took, therefore, eight weeks to make forty fast days. In the Latin Church it took six weeks and four days.

Q. *To whom is attributed the introduction of the Septuagesima season?*

A. To Pope Pelagian I (560), or to his successor, Pope John III (573).

B.—1. Lent

Q. *What is the origin of the word Lent?*

A. Lent comes from an old English word, *lenten*, meaning spring—the season of Lent coinciding with the season of spring.

Q. *What is Lent itself?*

A. Lent is a time of preparation for the Christian Pasch.

Q. *What is meant by the Christian Pasch?*

A. The Christian Pasch is the commemoration of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Our Saviour. The three days, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday, thus form, in the words of St. Augustine, a sacred triduum bound together by the two great realities in the economy of Man's Redemption, viz : the Passion and Resurrection of Christ. Christ " by dying hath overcome our (spiritual) death, and by rising again hath restored our life (of grace and blessedness) " [the Paschal Preface].

Q. *How long did that preparation for the Christian Pasch originally last?*

A. For a period of forty days, from the first Sunday in Lent to Good Friday, the beginning of the Christian Pasch.

The Secret of the Mass of the First Sunday in Lent opens with these words : " We solemnly offer the Sacrifice of the beginning of Lent."

Q. *From what aspect then is Christ viewed in the Paschal Cycle?*

A. Christ is regarded in the Paschal Cycle in His character as Destroyer of sin and Giver or Source of life eternal.

Q. *In view of this aspect of Christ, what is the corresponding duty which the liturgy impresses on us?*

A. We must depart from the ways of sin and by entering into union with Christ receive the life of grace which conducts us to life eternal. We must die to sin with Christ upon the Cross that we may rise with Him to a new life of grace on Resurrection morning.

Q. *How is this departure from sin and this union with Christ brought about?*

A. It was first effected in our baptism, when in the language of St. Paul we were buried with Christ in the font and rose from the font with Him to a new life of grace. Lent was the time of preparation for baptism—a resurrection to a new life.

The departure from sin and the union with Christ are constantly effected when we do penance for sin and are restored to grace. Lent was the special time of preparation of public sinners for absolution from sin—a resurrection of the soul from death to life.

Q. *What, then, is the key to the understanding of the Lenten liturgy?*

A. Knowledge of the preparation of the Catechumens for Baptism on Holy Saturday and of public sinners for absolution on Holy Thursday. This twofold preparation impregnates the liturgy of the first four weeks of Lent.

Q. *What of the remaining weeks of Lent?*

A. Those are devoted to the manifestation of the growing hatred of the Jews against Our Divine Lord, and to the consideration of His Passion, Death and Resurrection.

Q. *In what did the preparation of the Catechumens and public sinners consist?*

A. The Catechumens had to undergo at first seven, and later on three examinations or scrutinies during the course of Lent; while public sinners, having been first clothed in sackcloth and ashes, were formally expelled from the Church and often confined to a

monastery. Both received instructions and had to undergo practices of penance.

Q. In this view of the Lenten liturgy how should the season of Lent be regarded by us?

A. Lent should be regarded as a time of retreat for the whole Christian world, a time for us as for the Catechumens and public sinners, of prayer, fasting and recollection as far as is consistent with the duties of our station in life :

> "Henceforth more sparing let us be
> Of food, of words, of sleep ;
> Henceforth beneath a stricter guard
> The roving senses keep." (Hymn at Matins.)

Q. What fast is most insisted upon in the liturgy?

A. Fast from sin without which the fast from food profiteth nothing, fast from self-indulgence, worldly pleasures and frivolous amusements.

Dancing, the frequentation of cinemas and theatres, the reading of novels, though not necessarily sinful in themselves, are opposed to the spirit of recollection that should characterise a good Catholic during the holy season of Lent. At one time the very Courts of Justice were not held in Lent, for all men stood, as it were, convinced of sin before the bar of Divine Justice :

> "And grant us, while by fasts we strive
> This mortal body to control,
> To fast from all the food of sin
> And so to purify the soul." (Hymn at Vespers.)

(*Cf.* The Secret of the Mass of Ember Wednesday in September).

Q. Did the Lenten fast always last for forty days as now?

A. In the 2nd century the fast lasted for two days

only—Good Friday and Holy Saturday—and for many Christians it was the custom to abstain from all food and drink on these two days. A century later the fast was extended to all Holy Week, and it is not until the 4th century in a Canon of the Council of Nice (325 A.D.) that a reference to a fast over a period of forty days is met with. As Sundays were not observed as fast days there were in the period of the Lenten six weeks only thirty-six fast days. Under Pope St. Gregory the Great († 604) four more days were added to complete the number of forty, and Ash Wednesday thus became the *caput jejunii*—the beginning of the fast. From the liturgical point of view it would be more accurate to regard these four days as a further period of intensive preparation for the Lent.

Q. *What special significance is attached to the number forty?*

A. Forty is a sacred number. For forty days the deluge lasted, for forty years the Israelites wandered in the desert. Elias fasted forty days and forty nights, as did Moses on Mount Sinai, and Our Lord in the desert.

Q. *How many stages of preparation for the Christian Pasch may be noted in the liturgy?*

A. Three—the Septuagesimal period, the four days beginning with Ash Wednesday, and the forty days beginning with the First Sunday of Lent.

Q. *What various liturgical regulations distinguish each of these three stages?*

A. As we have seen, in Septuagesima violet vestments are worn, the *Gloria in excelsis* is omitted in the Mass, the Alleluia ceases in both Mass and Divine Office.

In the period of four days to these prescriptions are added the substitution of the folded chasubles for the dalmatic and tunic of the deacon and sub-deacon, the

silencing of the organ and the absence of flowers from the altar.

And in the third and last stage it is permitted to recite Vespers before midday, the hour at which it was usual from the 13th century to take the one meal that the strict Lenten regulations permit on days of fast. A new quarter of the Breviary begins : new hymns, etc., are assigned.

Q. *What is the special liturgical feature of the ferials of Lent?*

A. Each ferial, like each Sunday, has a Mass of its own—a Station Mass.

Q. *What was the ceremony of this Station Mass?*

A. The people and clergy of Rome—the offering up of Sacrifice being, as we know, the official act of worship of the whole community—assembled at a pre-arranged place and proceeded in processional order to the Station Church of the day where Mass was offered up by the Pope or his representative. A homily on the Gospel was preached by the celebrant and the place of the Station Mass for the next day was announced. With less pomp and ceremony these Station Masses are still celebrated in Rome.

Q. *What indications of these Station Masses survive to-day?*

A. The name of the Church at which the Station Mass used to be held is given at the head of the Proper Mass of each day.

Q. *Do these indications help us towards a right understanding of the Lenten Masses?*

A. Most decidedly. The titular of the Church at which the Mass was said often determines the text of the Mass, e.g., the Mass of the Wednesday of Quarter Tense of Lent was held at the Church of St. Mary Major, and this accounts for the selection of that day's

Gospel, which contains a eulogy of Our Blessed Lady ; the Collect of the Thursday after the Third Sunday in Lent is an invocation of SS. Cosmas and Damian, because the Church of SS. Comas and Damian was the Station Church for that day. The Mass of Lætare Sunday is replete with references to the New Jerusalem, because the Station Mass that Sunday was held at the Church of the Holy Cross at Jerusalem. In this church a large relic of the Holy Cross was preserved, and the church itself was on that account regarded in Rome in the light of Jerusalem itself. It was known simply as Jerusalem.

Q. *Cite some portions of the Lenten Masses that deal most directly with the preparation of the Catechumens ?*

A. The Lessons on the Call of the Gentiles to the faith—the miracle of Elias in favour of the widow of Sarepta (Tuesday after Second Sunday in Lent) ; Naaman, general of the army of the King of Syria, cured of his leprosy in the waters of the Jordan (Monday after Third Sunday in Lent) ; the Mass of Lætare Sunday ; the Mass of the following Wednesday, the great scrutiny, when the Gospels were explained and the Apostles' Creed and the Our Father taught to the Catechumens for the first time.

Q. *Cite similarly for direct reference to conversion from sin ?*

A. The parable of the Prodigal Son (Saturday after Second Sunday in Lent) ; the story of the Samaritan woman (Friday after the Third Sunday in Lent) ; the Resurrection of the son of the Sunamite woman (the Epistle of Thursday after Fourth Sunday in Lent), with the account, in the Gospel of the same Mass, of the resurrection of the son of the widow of Naim.

Q. *What bearing upon our Lenten observance have these striking features of the Lenten liturgy ?*

A. The preparation of the Catechumens should help us to value at its true worth the gift of faith bestowed in us in baptism, should help us to realise more vividly the obligations imposed on us by baptism, and should make us prepare in the spirit of the Church for the due celebration of the Resurrection of Our Saviour, with whom we have all in our baptism risen from the dead.

The preparation of public sinners for absolution should remind us of our own sins, fill us with the true spirit of penance and inspire in us unbounded trust in God that we may die with Christ to sin, and rise with Christ to a new life of grace.

The Lessons and Chants and prayers of each Mass thus constitutes a Lenten sermon of the deepest import which, by its identification with the Holy Sacrifice, acquires of itself an infallible efficacy.

Q. *When were the Lenten Masses composed?*

A. All except those of Thursdays existed in the time of Pope St Gregory the Great (+604). The Thursdays' Masses were introduced under Pope Gregory II (+ 731).

Q. *What is notable in their structure?*

A. 1. The beauty and precision of the Collects which, in wondrous variety of phrase, make petition almost always for the one grace—to make a worthy and fruitful use of Lent by true observance and sanctification of the fast.

2. The close correspondence in idea between the Epistle and Gospels of many Masses, e.g., the Epistle and Gospel of the Monday after Third Sunday in Lent, Friday after Third Sunday in Lent, Thursday after Fourth Sunday in Lent, etc.

3. The recurrence of the same Tract on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of each week. It most aptly suggested the true spirit of Lenten piety and probably

used to be recited during the penitential processions in bare feet that characterised early Christian Lenten observance. Its appeal for help is based on the highest motives of all: "for the glory of Thy name," and during the appeal at High Mass the sacred ministers and people kneel as humble supplicants.

4. The texts of the *Communio* with occasional interruptions, notably on Thursdays, are taken from consecutive psalms, beginning with Ps. 1 and proceeding on to Ps. 26.

5. The Preface of Lent explains the purpose of the fast. "We give thanks to God, Who by fasting of the body dost curb our vices, dost lift our minds, dost give us strength and reward through Christ Our Lord."

6. The special prayer of ferial Masses, called *Oratio super populum* (the Prayer over the People), which occurs after the Post-communion, and to which we should listen with bowed heads and on bended knees.

Q. *Does the liturgy attach a special importance to the ferials of Lent?*

A. For centuries no feast was celebrated in Lent so sacrosanct were the ferials. The first feast permitted was the Feast of the Annunciation in the 6th century. Other feasts were added in the course of time, but Pius X, in his effort to restore the early Christian ideals, raised the ferial Masses to something approaching their old-time dignity. They may now be said even on Major doubles. No private Votive may be said in Lent, and the "Common Mass" of the Dead may be said only on the first free day of the week. In all cases, even in "Solemn Votives for a grave cause," the ferial must be commemorated and its Gospel said as the Last Gospel.

Q. *What of the Sundays of Lent?*

A. The Sundays yield to no feast.

2. Ash Wednesday

Q. *What is the special feature of Ash Wednesday?*

A. Ashes are blessed and put on the foreheads or strewn on the heads of the faithful in the form of a cross with these words: "Remember, man, thou art but dust and unto dust thou shalt return."

Q. *What is the symbolism of ashes?*

A. Ashes symbolise the frailty and transience of all earthly and of all human things. The putting on of ashes, moreover, symbolises repentance for sin.

Q. *When was this ceremony first introduced into the Church?*

A. In the early ages of the Church ashes were put on the heads of public sinners before their formal expulsion from Church during the season of Lent.

Q. *When was it used in respect of all the faithful?*

A. About the 12th century.

Q. *Of what does it remind us?*

A. Of the shortness of human life, of death as a punishment for sin. "We put the ashes upon our heads in token of our humility and to obtain forgiveness" (Prayer of Blessing).

Q. *How do the ashes help us to acquire the spirit of penance?*

A. The blessing of the ashes makes of them a Sacramental. The Church prays "that they may be a wholesome remedy to all who humbly implore Thy Holy Name, and conscious of their sins, accuse themselves, deploring their crimes before Thy Divine clemency"; and again, "that Thou mayst fill them (*i.e.*, those on whom the ashes are put) with the spirit of compunction and effectually grant these things which they have justly prayed for" (Prayer of Blessing).

Q. *How are the ashes for the ceremony procured?*

A. By burning the blessed palms that are kept over from the previous Palm Sunday.

Thus it is in consonance with the liturgy not to preserve the blessed palm in our homes beyond the Ash Wednesday of the succeeding Lent.

Q. *What is the special purport of the Mass of Ash Wednesday?*

A. To put us into the right spirit of the Lenten season—an earnest spirit of penance in atonement for sin tempered by a perfect trust in the mercy of God (*cf.*, the Introit, Prayers, Gradual, Tract). In the Gospel Our Lord Himself tells us how to fast.

Q. *What thoughts are suggested by the Masses of the three succeeding days?*

A. Thursday's Mass tells us of the qualities of prayer, humility, confidence and perseverance after the manner of Ezechias and the centurion (Epistle and Gospel). Friday's Mass teaches us that without the spirit of charity and of justice our fasting is in vain; and on Saturday we are exhorted to have courage and confidence despite the obstacles in our path.

3. Sundays in Lent to Passiontide

Q. *How are the Sundays in Lent designated?*

A. The first four are called after the first words of their respective Introits. The first Sunday is called *Invocabit* (He shall call upon me); the second, *Reminiscere* (Remember); the third, *Oculi* (My eyes are ever towards the Lord); the fourth, *Lætare* (Rejoice); the fifth is known as Passion Sunday, and the sixth as Palm Sunday.

Q. *What is the chief lesson of the First Sunday in Lent?*

A. Our Lord's contest with and victory over Satan

are brought before us together with the coming of the angels to minister to Him. In our struggle with Satan victory is achieved only by self-denial. Assistance from heaven can be confidently relied upon in all our efforts. The constantly recurring versicle and response of the Office assures us of this :

V. "God hath given His angels charge over thee.
R. To keep thee in all thy ways" (Ps. 90).

Q. *What is to be noted regarding the Tract?*

A. The Tract constitutes a whole psalm in accordance with the ancient custom.

Q. *What is to be noted regarding the Mass of the Second Sunday?*

A. In the night before the Second Sunday in Lent the Catechumens were brought to the Church of St. Peter for the Station fixed for Saturday of Lenten Quarter Tense, which lasted on to the Sunday and served as the Sunday Mass. When the Quarter Tense Mass—the Mass of Ordinations—was fixed for Saturday morning, the Sunday which was vacant had a Station Mass provided for it in another church, and in the Sunday Mass the Gospel of the Saturday was retained (*cf.* the Third Sunday of Advent).

Q. *What instructions does this Mass convey?*

A. The Gospel, which is of the Transfiguration, brings home to us the truth, that as Christ had to suffer and so enter into His glory, so it is by penance and suffering that we enter into Heaven.

The spirit of impurity and the spirit of dishonesty (Epistle) are amongst the great obstacles to our attainment of that goal. Self-denial will drive out sin and win us grace.

Q. *How does the Third Sunday warn us in regard to our struggle with Satan?*

A. If our opposition to him, our fight against sin, be not constant, Satan with seven other spirits more wicked than himself will return into the house whence he came out (Gospel). We must walk as children of the light and be not deceived by vain words (Epistle). We must watch and pray.

Q. *What is the special character of the Fourth Sunday in Lent?*

A. The Fourth Sunday in Lent strikes a note of joy. The altar is decorated, the organ sounds, the dalmatic and tunic are worn (*cf.*, the Third Sunday of Advent). It was the Sunday before the great scrutiny that used to be held on the Wednesday of the fourth week in Lent. On that Wednesday took place the ceremony of the *aperitio aurium* (the opening of the ears: *cf.*, the Ephpheta of the Baptismal service) and of the *Traditio symbolorum* (the teaching of the Creed and the Our Father and the explanation of the Gospels). These ceremonies assured the Catechumens of their birth to a new life, of their resurrection on Easter morning. The joyous anticipation of it all gladdened the liturgy of the Fourth Sunday which is called *Lætare* Sunday.

It heralds for us by way of encouragement the joys of Easter before we enter upon the deeper gloom of Passiontide. We should rejoice that we belong to the Jerusalem of the New Covenant, to our Holy Mother the Church, who has given birth to us, likewise, in the Sacrament of Baptism.

Q. *What special ceremony takes place on Lætare Sunday?*

A. The Blessing of the Golden Rose by the Pope, who presents it to some distinguished or royal personage in reward of faithful service to the Church. Originally a natural bloom used to be blessed and presented to the Roman Prefect or some high official of the Roman Court. The rose may be blessed at other times.

Q. *What is special to the Saturday before Passion Sunday?*

A. It is a day appointed for the Ordination service, and is known as *Sitientes* Saturday, from the first word of the Introit.

4. Passiontide

Q. *What great change takes place in the Lenten liturgy at Passiontide?*

A. The character of the liturgy is wholly changed. Hitherto the faithful in the Introit, Gradual, Tract, confessed their guilt before God and built their hopes of pardon on His loving kindness. In Passiontide it is the suffering Christ who cries out with the Psalmist to His Eternal Father to help Him in His dire necessity, for His enemies are encompassing Him. Hitherto we were exhorted to do penance for sin; now we are bidden to suffer and to mourn with Christ.

Q. *What special liturgical regulations are made for Passiontide?*

A. The crucifixes, sacred pictures and images are covered with violet cloth. The *Judica* psalm is suppressed with the *Gloria Patri* in Masses of the period. A proper Preface is prescribed.

Q. *Why are the crucifixes, etc., veiled?*

A. The idea was probably suggested by the words, "He hid Himself," contained in the Gospel of Passion Sunday, or it may be a survival of the custom once common—during the whole of Lent— to drop a curtain (the so-called Hunger-cloth) in front of the altar between the nave and the choir. In any case the crucifix was covered with a view to the Good Friday ceremony of unveiling the crucifix. The image of Christ is hidden from our sight that it may be more deeply impressed on our hearts.

Q. *Why are the "Judica psalm" and the "Gloria Patri" omitted?*

A. To emphasise the deep sadness of the Church at the sufferings of her Divine Spouse.

The omission of the *Judica* psalm may be traced to the antiquity of the Masses of Passiontide which existed before the introduction of the *Judica* psalm, and to the special reverence which permitted no alteration in the Masses of this period. It may be noted that the Introit of the Mass of the Passion Sunday is taken from the *Judica* psalm itself, and the omission of the psalm at the foot of the altar may be due to a desire to avoid repetition.

Q. *What are the leading ideas of the Masses of Passiontide?*

A. The growing hatred of the Jews against Our Lord, and the development of their conspiracy to bring about His destruction. The dark clouds gather round His Head to burst out into elemental fury on Good Friday.

Q. *What in addition is emphasised in the Divine Office?*

A. The triumph of the Cross expressed in the *Vexilla Regis*, the Vesper Hymn :

> "The Royal Banners forward go,
> The Cross shines forth in mystic glow
> When Life for sinners death endured
> And Life by death for man procured."

Confidence in the power of the Cross :

> "O Cross our one reliance hail!
> This holy Passiontide avail
> To give fresh merit to the saint
> And pardon to the penitent."
>
> —(Neale's Translation of Vesper Hymn.)

Q. *How are this triumph and this confidence in the power of the Cross expressed in the Preface for Passion-tide?*

A. "We give thanks to Thee, O Holy Lord, Father Almighty . . . Who didst set the salvation of mankind upon the tree of the Cross, so that whence came death, thence also life might rise again, and he that overcame by the tree, on the tree also might be overcome: through Christ Our Lord."

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Chapter XXIII

HOLY WEEK

I.

Q. *Why is Holy Week so called?*

A. Because during that week the Church commemorates the especially holy mysteries of man's Redemption.

Q. *What is its liturgical name?*

A. *Hebdomada* (formerly *Septima*) *Major*, that is, the greater week, on account of the events it celebrates.

Q. *How was this week observed in former times?*

A. It was a week of fast; the Courts of Justice did not sit; servile work was forbidden up to the 7th century; an amnesty was extended to certain classes of prisoners. It was a time of great religious observance, the thoughts of all being intent upon the redeeming work of Christ. Indulgence in social pleasures and amusements was regarded as totally alien to the spirit of the holy time.

Q. *What are the special events commemorated during this week?*

A. The Passion, Death and Resurrection of Our Saviour—the incidents in detail being commemorated in almost chronological order.

Q. *What striking practices of the Church are recalled in the Holy Week ceremonial?*

A. The administration of Baptism, Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist to the Catechumens; hence, the blessing of the oils on Holy Thursday in view of baptism and confirmation ceremonies and the blessing of the baptismal font on Holy Saturday.

Q. *What are the sentiments expressed in the liturgy of this week?*

A. *Sadness* at the death of Christ and *fear of God* through His rejection of the chosen people brought about by their own hardness of heart. Our sins, too, have crucified Christ. God never fails to punish sin that is not repented of.

Consolation in the knowledge of the fact so vividly brought before our minds that the Eternal Father, Whom we have offended by our sins, has so loved the world as to give up for our Redemption His only begotten Son.

Thanksgiving for the glorious Redemption which reaches its highest form of expression in the *Exsultet* of Holy Saturday.

Even on these days of gloom the thought of the Resurrection is present to stir men's hearts to hope.

2. Palm Sunday

Q. *What is the opening day of Holy Week called?*

A. It is called Palm Sunday (*Dominica Palmarum*) from the procession of palms that marks the liturgy of the day.

Q. *What are the elements of the Palm Sunday liturgy?*

A. The blessing and procession of palms, and Holy Mass during which the Passion according to St. Matthew is recited by the celebrant, and at High Mass, in addition, sung by the deacons of the Passion.

Q. *What is the purpose of the procession of palms?*

A. To recall and to represent in dramatic form the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem that took place five days before His Death upon the Cross.

A. *What is the origin of the ceremony?*

Q. In the 4th century in Jerusalem the faithful

marched on this day to the Mount of Olives and returned to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre bearing palm branches in their hands. In the early Middle Ages, in accordance with this practice of the Church of Jerusalem, the faithful used to proceed to a Church outside the town, and bearing palms and olive branches, return to the gates of the town and there pay homage to the Redeemer, Who was represented sometimes by the Book of the Gospels, sometimes by a statue. The gates were then opened and all proceeded to the church for the celebration of Holy Mass.

Q. *What remnant of this practice still survives?*

A. The procession goes outside the church and halts for a few moments during the singing of a hymn outside the closed door of the church.

Q. *When was the Blessing of the Palms introduced?*

A. Though the Procession of Palms was practised as far back as the 4th century, the Blessing of the Palms is not met with until about the 7th century.

Q. *What are the special features of this Blessing?*

A. In form it is similar to a Mass without Offertory, Canon or Communion; for it has an Introit, Collect, Epistle, Tract, Gospel, Preface, Sanctus. It is a "dry Mass" with prayers of Blessing of the Palms (one before the Preface and five after it).

Q. *What is the remainder of the ceremony?*

A. The palms are incensed and aspersed with holy water and a prayer is said. The palms are distributed, antiphons being sung meanwhile. A prayer follows the distribution and the procession starts. When the procession reaches the church door outside, the door is closed. The chanters remain inside the door and sing the distichs of the hymn, *Gloria, laus*. At the end of each distich those outside sing the refrain. The hymn being over, the sub-deacon or acolyte knocks at the

door with the shaft of the cross, and when it is opened the procession enters the church to the singing of the antiphon *Ingrediente Domino*, "As Our Lord entered the Holy City."

Q. *What is signified by the palm branches and olive branches respectively?*

A. The branches of palm, says one of the prayers of blessing, signify Christ's "triumph over the prince of death," and the "branches of the olive proclaim, in a manner, the coming of a spiritual unction." Palm is the symbol of victory and triumph and of virtue ("the just shall flourish like the palm tree," Ps. 91, 13). We shall rejoice with Christ and go forth "to meet Him with good works" (Prayer before the Preface).

Olive is the symbol of peace, meekness and mercy. We should be peaceful, meek and merciful if we are to meet Christ.

Q. *To whom is the authorship of the Hymn "Gloria, laus" attributed?*

A. To Theodolf, Bishop of Orleans, who was a contemporary of Charlemagne. He is said to have composed this hymn while in prison in Angers, and to have been released on the strength of it by the king, Louis le Débonnaire.

Q. *What does the striking of the door with the shaft of the cross symbolise?*

A. It symbolises the opening by the Cross of Christ of the gates of heaven that were shut against us by our sins.

Q. *Must the branches borne in procession be palm or olive?*

A. Palm or olive are not always easy to procure, and so, as implied in the fourth of the five prayers after the Preface, branches of "other trees" are used—yew, willow, box, etc.

Q. *What is the effect of the Blessing?*

A. The branches become Sacramentals, for the Church prays "that into whatever place they may be brought these who dwell in that place may obtain Thy blessing."

The branches themselves have no magic effect as the pagans thought. Their virtue proceeds from the Blessing of the Church.

Q. *How should the faithful receive the palm from the celebrant?*

A. Men should first kiss the palm and then the celebrant's hand. Women kiss the palm only.

Q. *How should they bear the palm?*

A. In procession those on the right bear the palm in the right hand, those on the left bear it in the left hand. During the Passion the palm is borne in the right hand.

Q. *Why is the palm borne during the singing or recitation of the Passion?*

A. To express our faith in and our loyalty to Christ our Redeemer.

Q. *What is notable in the character of the texts of the Mass?*

A. The note of triumph that sounded in the procession ceases. The anguish of our dying Saviour rings in our ear. The Introit, and all the chants of the Mass tell of His sufferings. The Epistle gives us of the essence of the Passion. Instead of the Gospel we have the history of the Passion according to St. Matthew represented to us in High Mass in dramatic form.

Q. *By whom is the Passion sung in High Mass?*

A. By three deacons. One is called the *Chronista* (the Narrator), for he narrates the various incidents of the Passion; a second is called the *Christus*, for he sings the words uttered by Christ; the third is called

the *Succentor* or *Synagoga*, who sings the words used by the other persons whose words are recorded in the Gospel. The choir often sing some of these latter words. The music of the Passion with the contrasting voices of the three parts is unsurpassable for its power and dignity.

Q. *What ceremony takes place during the singing or recitation of the Passion?*

A. When the death of Our Lord is recorded all kneel down in adoring silence for the space of a *Pater Noster.*

Q. *Is the complete narration of the Passion sung by the deacons of the Passion?*

A. No; the last portion of the Passion narrative is sung by the deacon of the Mass or recited by the priest in Low Mass as the Gospel.

Q. *What is the last Gospel of the Mass?*

A. At a Mass before which the palms have been blessed the Gospel is the Gospel of St. John. When the palms have not been blessed before the Mass the last Gospel is the Gospel of the Blessing of the Palms.

Q. *What of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday?*

A. The thought of the sufferings of Christ pervades the Masses of these days: on Tuesday is read the history of the Passion according to St. Mark; on Wednesday there are two Lessons—as on Wednesdays of Quarter-Tense—followed by the history of the Passion according to St. Luke. In the Collect of Tuesday we pray "we may celebrate the mysteries of Our Lord's Passion that we may deserve to receive Thy pardon," and on Wednesday we pray God Who wast pleased that His Son should endure the ignominy of the Cross for us to drive away from us the power of the enemy and grant us the grace of resurrection.

The ingratitude of His chosen people—the bitterest of all Christ's sufferings as He revealed to St. Margaret

Mary—is brought out in the vivid phrase of Psalms 3, 4, 6 and 8, and piteous appeal is made, as in the apparitions of the Sacred Heart, for the loving sympathy of the faithful.

3. Tenebræ

Q. *What is understood by the service of Tenebræ?*

A. Tenebræ is the public recitation of Matins and Lauds of the Divine Office which takes place on the evenings of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of Holy Week.

Q. *Why is it called Tenebræ?*

A. *Tenebræ* means darkness, and it was the custom in the early Middle Ages—the psalms and lessons being committed to memory—to recite the Matins and Lauds at midnight in perfect darkness. At the present day all lights are extinguished in the church at the concluding portion of the function.

Q. *What is the character of this function?*

A. Sadness and mourning at the sufferings and death of Our Redeemer. The treachery of Judas serves as a kind of *motif* for the Thursday Office, the Matins and Lauds of which, in accordance with the usual practice, are recited on the evening before, that is, Wednesday; the mortal sufferings and burying of Christ give their character to the Office of Good Friday, while the sadness and complaint of the Holy Saturday Office are relieved by the thought of the approaching Resurrection.

Q. *What is specially to be noted of the Office in the Tenebræ service?*

A. There is no invitatory, no hymn, no absolution, no blessing, no *Gloria Patri*—the old form of the Office being preserved these three days, consisting of psalms, lessons from the Old Testament, from the New Testament, and from the Fathers, with responsories set to a

music that for its expression of sorrow and pain finds no equal in profane art.

Q. *What is notable in the ceremony of Tenebræ?*

A. On the Epistle side of the choir near the altar there is set up a triangular candlestick made of wood, called the hearse, on which fifteen candles are lighted—one at the top and seven at each side. After each psalm or canticle one of these candles is extinguished until all, save the top one, are quenched. During the *Benedictus* the candles on the altar are likewise extinguished. The candles on the hearse and on the altar—like the altar candles on Good Friday—are of tawny unbleached wax.

Q. *What of the candle kept lighting upon the wooden frame?*

A. It is held for a moment on the altar while the antiphon at the end of the *Benedictus* is being sung. It is then hidden away during the remainder of the Office. When the Office is completed the candle still lighted is held up in sight of the congregation. This latter ceremony concludes the Tenebræ service.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the ceremonies described in the two previous answers?*

A. The candles extinguished one by one denote the abandonment of Our Lord by His Apostles. The top candle symbolises Our Lord Himself. Its removal from the frame and the subsequent holding up of it to view symbolise the Burial of Our Lord in the tomb and His subsequent Resurrection.

Q. *What ceremony follows the conclusion of the Prayer "Respice"?*

A. The striking of the benches by those in choir.

Q. *What is the symbolism of it?*

A. It represents the trembling of the earth that took place at the death of Christ.

Q. *What is the origin of the practice?*

A. The giving of a signal by the presiding Abbot that the Office had concluded.

4. The Last Days of Holy Week

Q. *What is a common feature of the liturgy of the last three days of Holy Week?*

A. The jealous care which the Church has taken to preserve the most ancient practices of its liturgy that have vanished in other days of the year, or have given way to innovations substituted or superadded in the course of centuries.

Q. *Enumerate some of these ancient practices proper to these especially sacred days?*

A. (*a*) The silencing of church bells from the end of the *Gloria in excelsis* of Holy Thursday to its beginning on Holy Saturday. Church bells were not used in the liturgy when these Masses assumed their present form.

(*b*) The procession of the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar of Repose. Before the Blessed Sacrament came to be preserved at the altar it was the rule to carry the consecrated Bread that remained over after the Mass to a room adjoining the church.

(*c*) The stripping of the altar after Vespers on Holy Thursday, or after the procession when Vespers are not publicly recited. It was the rule in early times to strip the altar after the Mass of each day.

(*d*) The prohibition to celebrate more than one Mass in each church. The celebration of only one Mass in each church was the ordinary practice. The priests concelebrated with the bishop, as the newly ordained priests do now on the day of their Ordination. Private Mass is allowed on Holy Thursday only in exceptional circumstances or by most special privilege.

(*c*) The Good Friday function up to the Adoration of the Cross preserves the oldest form of the first portion of the Mass, while the Prophecies, Prayers and Chants of Holy Saturday that follow upon the *Exsultet* reproduce the ancient Vigil Office (*cf.* Eisenhofen.)

Holy Thursday

Q. *What is the liturgical term for Holy Thursday?*

A. *Feria Quinta in Cœna Domini.*—Thursday of the Lord's Supper.

Q. *What are the constituent parts of that day's ceremony?*

A. 1. Holy Mass.

2. During Pontifical Mass in cathedral churches the Blessing of the Oils.

3. The Procession of the Blessed Sacrament from the High Altar to the Altar of Repose.

4. Vespers—where Vespers are publicly recited.

5. The stripping of the altars.

6. The *Mandatum*—in monasteries and many cathedral churches.

Q. *What is the main purpose of the liturgy of Holy Thursday?*

A. To celebrate, in the first instance, the institution of the Blessed Eucharist and the establishment of the Christian priesthood.

Q. *What additional object has the Pontifical Mass in cathedral churches?*

A. The Blessing of the Oil of the Sick, Oil of Chrism, and the Oil of Catechumens.

Q. *What was the practice in former times?*

A. In the 4th century two Masses were said—one in the morning and another, after the manner of the Last Supper, in the evening.

In the 7th century three Masses used to be said—one for the reconciliation of public penitents who were formally received back into the Church upon Holy Thursday; another for the Blessing of the Oils; and a third to celebrate the institution of the Blessed Eucharist. Of these three the last alone has survived.

Q. *What is singular in the vestments worn at Mass?*

A. The vestments are white, the symbol of joy in the midst of the mourning of Holy Week. The joy proceeds from the institution of the Blessed Sacrament which the Mass celebrates.

Q. *What takes place during the recitation of the "Gloria in excelsis"?*

A. The Sanctus bell and church bells are rung, and, after the *Gloria in excelsis*, are silent until the *Gloria in excelsis* of Holy Saturday. Wooden clappers take the place of the Sanctus bell. This silencing of the bells has come to symbolise the universal mourning and sorrow at the Passion and Death of Christ.

Q. *What do the texts of the Mass refer to?*

A. They refer to the treachery of Judas and to the washing of the feet of the Apostles by Our Lord. The Epistle tells us of the reverence we should have for the Blessed Sacrament, and the Gospel reminds us of the purity of soul with which we should receive Holy Communion.

Q. *What other features of the Mass are notable?*

A. Two large Hosts are consecrated—one of which is borne in a chalice in solemn procession to the Altar of Repose and is reserved there for the Mass of the Presanctified on Good Friday. There is no *pax* (kiss of peace) given. This omission is due to the betrayal of Judas which is referred to in the Gospel. It was with a kiss that Jesus was betrayed. "Judas drew near to Jesus, to kiss Him" (Luke xxii. 47).

Q. *When does this procession take place?*

A. Immediately after the last Gospel of the Mass to the singing of the hymn composed by St. Thomas Aquinas: *Pange lingua gloriosi Corporis mysterium*, the concluding strophes of which are the *Tantum Ergo* and *Genitori* of the Benediction service.

Q. *What is the next ceremony?*

A. The recitation of Vespers in choir followed by the stripping of the altar; but, where Vespers are not recited, the celebrant, having returned to the High Altar, proceeds at once to denude it, the antiphon, *Diviserunt* and Ps. 21, "*Deus, Deus meus*: O God, my God, look upon me: Why hast Thou forsaken me"? being recited while the ceremony of denudation is taking place.

Q. *What is the symbolism of this stripping of the altar?*

A. The altar represents Christ, and the stripping of it denotes the abandonment of Christ upon the Cross. Flowers, candles, cloths, reliquaries are removed. The tabernacle is empty, its door open. All is desolation. We are moved to mourn with Christ.

Q. *What is the chief object in visiting the Altar of Repose?*

A. To commemorate the institution of the Blessed Sacrament and to atone to Christ by our adoration and love for the insults offered Him in the course of His bitter Passion—the insults in the Court of the High Priest and of Pilate, the mockery of Herod and of the Jewish mob in the streets of Jerusalem.

Q. *What indulgence is attached to this visit?*

A. 1. A plenary indulgence for all who perform the Holy Hour in memory of the Institution of the Blessed Sacrament privately or publicly, before the Altar of Repose, under the condition of Confession and Com-

munion on that day or within the week following it. (14th July, 1815; 6th April, 1816.)

2. A plenary indulgence, to be gained once for all the faithful who visit the Blessed Sacrament in the Altar of Repose on Holy Thursday or Good Friday and pray for the intentions of our Holy Father the Pope, under the condition of Confession and Communion on Holy Thursday or Easter Sunday. (10 years and 10 quarantines for each subsequent visit. 7th March, 1815.)

Q. *When and where are the oils blessed?*

A. They are blessed at the Pontifical Mass in the cathedral church—the Oil of the Sick being blessed before the *Per quem hæc omnia* that precedes the *Pater Noster*; the Oil of Chrism and the Oil of Catechumens being blessed after the ablutions that follow the consumption of the Precious Blood. They are blessed not at the altar, but at a table placed near the centre of the choir.

Q. *Of what does the Blessing of the Oil of the Sick consist?*

A. It is a brief blessing consisting of an exorcism and a prayer in which petition is made that through Christ's holy blessing the oil may strengthen soul and body.

Q. *Is the Blessing of the other two oils more elaborate?*

A. It constitutes a most imposing ceremony in which, besides the bishop, when the full number is available, twelve priests, seven deacons and seven sub-deacons, robed in the sacred vestments of their Order, participate.

Q. *Describe the ceremony of the Blessing of the Oil of Chrism?*

A. At the summons of the assistant priest the priests, deacons and sub-deacons proceed in solemn procession to the sacristy. There the balsam is handed to a sub-deacon, and the two urns of oil to two deacons. The

procession returns to the church to the chanting of the *O Redemptor*, the refrain of which is taken up by the choir after each verse.

The balsam is first blessed, and then mixed with a little of the Oil of Chrism to represent the union of the divinity and humanity in Christ. The bishop breathes three times over the urn containing the Oil of Chrism and the twelve priests follow suit. An exorcism is pronounced and is followed by a long Preface which refers to the sacred uses to which the Chrism is put in Baptism and Confirmation. The bishop pours the balsam into the urn and in rising tones hails the blessed Chrism three times singing *Ave Sanctum Chrisma* (Hail, holy Chrism), and kisses the lip of the urn. The twelve priests hail the Chrism likewise, genuflecting at each *Ave* as they approach the table to kiss the lip of the urn.

Q. *Describe the ceremony of the Blessing of the Oil of Catechumens?*

A. As with the Oil of Chrism, before the exorcism is pronounced, the bishop and the twelve priests breathe on the Oil of Catechumens. The exorcism follows, and after it the prayer of blessing is pronounced in which the Sacrament of Baptism is referred to in striking terms. Then, as in the previous blessing, the bishop salutes the sacred oil three times, singing in rising tones, *Ave Sanctum oleum* (Hail ! holy oil) and kisses the lip of the urn. The twelve priests hail the oil likewise, genuflecting at each *Ave* as they approach the table to kiss the lip of the urn.

Q. *How is the ceremony concluded?*

A. The solemn procession is again formed of priests, deacons and sub-deacons headed as before by thurifer, acolytes and cross-bearer, and returns to the chanting of the *O Redemptor* to the sacristy, where the oils are

given over to safe keeping and for distribution to the priests of the diocese for the performance of their sacred functions. The procession returns from the sacristy and all resume their places in choir.

Q. *When is the Oil of the Sick used?*

A. In the administration of Extreme Unction and in the Blessing of church bells.

Q. *When is the Oil of Chrism used?*

A. In the Blessing of the Baptismal font, at the anointing of the head in the administration of Baptism, in Confirmation, in the consecration of a bishop, in the consecration of churches, altars, chalices, patens and church bells.

Q. *When is the Oil of Catechumens used?*

A. In the Blessing of the Baptismal font, at the anointing of the breast and between the shoulders in the administration of Baptism, at the Ordination of priests, and at the consecration of kings and queens and of altars.

Q. *What is the Mandatum?*

A. It is a ceremony of the washing of the feet of thirteen persons that takes place in monasteries and in many cathedral churches. In monasteries the Abbot washes the feet of thirteen monks ; in cathedral churches the bishop washes the feet of thirteen poor persons.

Q. *What is the origin of this ceremony?*

A. Our Lord's washing of the feet of the Apostles before the Last Supper and His command, " for I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so, you do also " (John xiii. 15).

Q. *Why is the ceremony called Mandatum?*

A. Because the word *Mandatum* is the first word of the first antiphon that is sung at the function. Compare the Masses known by the first word of the Introit.

Q. *To what else does this word Mandatum give rise?*

A. To the name Maundy Thursday, which is given to the day.

Q. *Describe the ceremony of the Mandatum?*

A. The deacon sings the Gospel of the day, and the celebrant taking off his cope is girded with a towel. He proceeds to wash the right foot of each of the thirteen persons, wipes the foot and kisses it. A series of antiphons are sung meanwhile by the choir. When the washing of the feet is over, the celebrant, having resumed the cope, recites the *Pater Noster* and certain versicles, and concludes with a prayer in which petition is made "that as here outward defilements are washed away for us and by us, so we may all have our inward sins washed by Thee."

Chapter XXIV

GOOD FRIDAY

Q. *What do Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday constitute?*

A. They constitute the celebration of the Christian Pasch; for the Christian Pasch in the full sense of the word embraces the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Our Saviour.

Q. *What great dogmatic truth should this celebration bring vividly before our minds?*

A. That Christ's mysteries are ours.

Q. *In what sense are the mysteries of Christ's Death and Resurrection ours?*

A. Christ is the new Adam, the head of the human race, and as all men sinned in Adam, so all men mystically and truly died with Christ upon the Cross, and rose with Him from the dead. This mystical death and resurrection, as we have already said, have actually taken place in our baptism, the union with Christ therein effected being preserved and strengthened in Holy Communion, and, if sundered by sin, restored in the Sacrament of Penance.

Q. *Why is Good Friday so called?*

A. Because on that day the greatest good was conferred on mankind—the Redemption was accomplished.

Q. *What is the liturgical name for Good Friday?*

A. Friday (*Feria Sexta*) *in Parasceve.*

Q. *What is the meaning of Parasceve?*

A. *Parasceve* is a Greek word, meaning preparation,

and is the term applied in the New Testament to the day on which Our Lord died—a day of preparation for Easter day. The Greek Church applies the name to every Friday ; the Latin Church to Good Friday alone. Every Friday in the Old Law was a day of preparation, when food, for instance, was prepared for the Sabbath on which day all servile work was forbidden.

Q. *What are the prevailing characteristics of this day's liturgy?*

A. Awe at the terrible tragedy of Calvary, sorrow at the intense sufferings of Our Divine Saviour, and mourning for His Death—grief, however, being relieved at the thought of the triumph of the Cross and of the Resurrection that was to take place on the third day.

Q. *How are these feelings manifested in the liturgy?*

A. In the awesome silence and gloom of the opening period followed by the homage paid to the Cross, in the praise and glory of the Resurrection in the antiphon that succeeds the *Improperia*, and in the triumphal chant of the *Vexilla Regis* in the procession from the Altar of Repose for the Mass of the Presanctified.

Q. *Enumerate the constituent parts of the Good Friday function.*

A. The function is made up of three distinct parts :

1. The Lessons interrupted by Tracts and Prayer followed by the Passion according to St. John, and a long series of petitions for the needs of the world.

2. The Adoration of the Cross.

3. The Mass of the Presanctified.

Q. *What is the general nature of the first part?*

A. It is the first part of the Mass—the Mass of the Catechumens—in its earliest form, that form of liturgical service which took place when the earliest Christians assembled for common prayer without offering up the Holy Sacrifice.

Q. *Why is the Holy Sacrifice not offered up on Good Friday?*

A. It is a survival—the sole survival of the time when it was the rule not to celebrate Mass on a fast day. It will be remembered that originally there were only two fast days in preparation for Easter, viz., Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

Q. *How is this exception explained?*

A. Good Friday was regarded with particular awe and reverence, and its liturgy above the liturgy of all other days was considered sacrosanct. So impressive and so awful is the memory of this sad and terrible anniversary, that the Church, as it were, does not desire to renew the Holy Sacrifice of the Cross on the day on which Christ offered Himself up a bleeding Victim to His Eternal Father.

"In the liturgy of this day," says Pope Benedict XIV, "He, Our Crucified Jesus, is so presented before our eyes that our hearts, stirred to the depths at the awful sight, should be prepared to receive the fruits of the Redemption" (*cf.* Schott).

1. The Initial Ceremonial

Q. *What is noticeable at the beginning of the function?*

A. The sacred ministers prostrate at the foot of the altar—a survival of a practice that was general in the earliest times of the Christian liturgy.

Q. *Describe the first portion of the liturgy of the day.*

A. The elements of it are derived from the practice of the Synagogue, and consist of Lessons interrupted by chants and prayer with the addition of the recitation or singing of the Passion according to St. John, and of prayers for the various necessities of mankind.

Q. *Give the substance of the Lessons and Tracts?*

A. The first Lesson, which marks the ordinary beginning of the Mass in the earliest times, is taken from *Osee*, and suggests the thought of Christ's sufferings and of His Resurrection from the dead, and of our dying with Him to sin and rising with Him to a new life of grace ; points out the curse that will befall the Jews, and utters the great truth that the observance of outer religious forms alone without the observance of God's Commandment of love is of no avail.

The first Tract, referring to the judgment of God upon the Last Day, impresses upon us the dispositions of soul that should be ours at the foot of the Cross.

The second Lesson speaks of the Paschal Lamb at the moment when the true Lamb of God is being led to the slaughter.

The second Tract is a piteous cry of the Messias at His betrayal by His friends into the hands of His cruel enemies.

The Passion, which is sung or recited as on Palm Sunday, records in the words of St. John the series of events which had been foretold by the prophets.

Q. *What is the form of the petitions that follow the Passion?*

A. The substance of the prayer is first announced by the celebrant. The deacon bids all kneel to consider, as it were, their petitions ; the sub-deacon bids them rise ; and the celebrant offers up the petitions of all. In a Low Mass the celebrant bids all kneel, a server bids all rise.

Q. *State the number and the nature of these prayers.*

A. There are eight prayers in all directed to the good of all mankind without exception and to the alleviation of every human misery.

Q. *What are the specific petitions in these prayers?*

A. Petitions are offered up for the whole Church ; for

the Pope as visible Head of the Church; for the various ranks of the hierarchy and for every condition of life amongst the faithful; for the Head of the Holy Roman Empire (now omitted), who was the protector of the Church; for the Catechumens, that in the waters of regeneration they may become adopted children of God; for the general spiritual and temporal wants of mankind; for heretics and schismatics that they may return to the true fold; for the perfidious Jews, that the scales may fall from their eyes and that they may see the light of the truth of Christ; and lastly, for pagans, that they may turn away from their graven images and idols and turn towards the true God.

Q. *Is there anything particularly to be remarked regarding the prayer for the Jews?*

A. That prayer is not preceded by a genuflection through horror of the Jews genuflecting before Our Lord in mockery of Him.

Q. *What is the origin of these prayers?*

A. As these prayers have no relation to the Passion of Our Lord or the Lenten season, they are most probably the ordinary "prayers of the faithful," recited at Mass when the Catechumens were formally dismissed from the Church. The "*Oremus*" that precedes the Offertory occupies the place of the prayers of the faithful.

2. The Adoration of the Cross

Q. *Account for the use of the word "Adoration" in the expression "The Adoration of the Cross"?*

A. The word "Adoration" is here identical with "homage" or "veneration." To "adore" had this general meaning originally, to pay homage, to show reverence, and is so found in Holy Scripture. In the Middle Ages the meaning was restricted, and came to be applied only to the homage we pay to God, and to

things having special reference to God, e.g. the instruments of the Passion which are reverenced not on account of themselves, but in their relation to the suffering Saviour—in this sense is the word applied in the Good Friday liturgy. To-day the word "to adore" is applied strictly to the worship we pay God alone.

Q. What is the origin of this ceremony?

A. After the finding of the True Cross in the 4th century, it was customary in Jerusalem, where the Cross was kept, to pay special honour to it on each recurring Good Friday. When particles of the True Cross were sent to different churches, the ceremony of adoring the Cross as observed in Jerusalem was carried out, and subsequently the like reverence was shown to the ordinary Crucifix on Good Friday throughout the whole Catholic Church.

Q. Describe the ceremony as it takes place now.

A. The celebrant having sung the "Solemn Prayers" retires from the altar to remove his chasuble. The Crucifix, covered with a violet veil, is handed to him (by the deacon when three sacred ministers carry out the function). The celebrant with face turned towards the people stands at the Epistle corner below the steps, uncovers the upper portion of the Cross containing the title (I.N.R.I.) and holds it up for the faithful to see. He intones the "*Ecce Lignum Crucis*" (Behold the wood of the Cross), the chanters taking up the succeeding words "*in quo salus mundi pependit*" (whereon the world's Salvation hung), and all except the celebrant kneel down while the choir answer "*Venite, adoremus*" (Come, let us adore).

Q. What is the second stage of this ceremony of the unveiling of the Cross?

A. The celebrant advances up the steps to the Epistle corner of the predella, unveils the head and right arm

of the Crucifix, sings in a higher tone the "*Ecce Lignum Crucis*," and, as before, all kneel at the "*Venite, adoremus.*"

Q. *How is the ceremony of unveiling concluded?*

A. The celebrant advances towards the centre of the altar, uncovers the whole Crucifix, and while holding it to the gaze of all the congregation sings in a still higher tone the "*Ecce Lignum Crucis.*" All kneel at the "*Venite, adoremus,*" and remain kneeling while the celebrant descends to put the Crucifix on a cushion which is placed at the lower steps of the altar. The Cross is then adored by those in choir and subsequently presented to the people to be kissed.

Q. *State the purpose of this striking ceremony?*

A. To honour and glorify the Cross at the very moment when Jesus hung upon it a criminal and endured His bitterest humiliations; to make reparation for our sins that nailed Him to His Cross, and to express our faith in the efficacy of the Cross in which is our salvation.

Q. *How does the celebrant adore the Cross?*

A. He takes off his shoes after the manner of those who took part in early times in the Lenten penitential processions, walks to a spot at some distance from the altar, kneels down and prostrates; he rises, advances a few paces towards the altar, and prostrates again. He kneels for the third time at the foot of the Crucifix, kisses it, and having genuflected, retires to his bench to read the *Improperia*, the antiphon in praise of the Cross, and if there be time the Hymn *Pange, lingua, gloriosi Lauream certaminis*, while the choir and people adore the Cross.

Q. *What are the "Improperia"?*

A. The *Improperia*, which are recited by the celebrant alternately with the deacon and sub-deacon (or servers)

and sung by the choir to the most moving music that ever stirred the heart of man, are reproaches put into the mouth of Jesus as He hangs upon the Cross and are directed against the Jews, who have repaid His benefits by black ingratitude.

Q. *What is the refrain of the first three "Improperia"?*

A. The Trisagion, the threefold praise of God—"Holy God, Strong God, Immortal God," recited in Greek and Latin.

Q. *Why this recitation in Greek and Latin?*

A. To show that all the world (summarised under Greeks and Romans) pays homage to the Crucified Jesus.

Q. *When were the "Improperia" introduced into the Good Friday liturgy?*

A. In the 11th century, while the antiphon and the hymn were introduced in the 9th and 10th centuries.

Q. *Quote the refrain of the remaining nine "Improperia"*

A. "*Popule Meus*"—"O My people, what have I done to thee? or in what have I grieved thee? Answer me."

Our answer should be our ardent love and adoration of Him as we pay homage to Him upon the Cross.

3. The Mass of the Presanctified.

Q. *What follows upon the adoration of the Cross?*

A. The candles are lighted upon the altar, the Missal is transferred to the Gospel side, the corporal spread out upon the altar, and amid the solemn silence of a kneeling people the Cross is borne by the celebrant (or deacon where there are three sacred ministers) from the altar steps to the altar, where it is placed in readiness for the Mass of the Presanctified.

Q. *What is the Mass of the Presanctified?*

A. It is the consumption at the High Altar of the

Host which was consecrated (or sanctified) the previous day, Holy Thursday, and preserved in the urn of the Altar of Repose.

Q. *How is the Sacred Host carried from the Altar of Repose?*

A. In solemn procession in which lighted candles are borne, and during which the triumphal song of the *Vexilla Regis* is sung.

Q. *Describe briefly the ceremonies of the Mass of the Presanctified.*

A. The chalice in which the Sacred Host is deposited is placed upon the altar and is incensed. The Sacred Host is taken from the chalice and placed upon the corporal. Wine and water are put into the chalice. The usual incensation of offerings and altar takes place. Having washed his hands the celebrant recites the "*In Spiritu humilitatis,*" and says the "*Orate fratres*" (to which, however, no response is made). He then says the "*Pater Noster*" and the "*Libera*" in the same tone of voice, raises the Sacred Host on high with his right hand—during which the clappers are sounded as at the elevation—divides the Host into three parts, says the third prayer of the priest's immediate preparation for Communion, recites the "*Domine, non sum dignus,*" partakes of the Sacred Host; receives the particle of the Host with wine from the chalice; washes his fingers, takes the ablutions, and the Mass ends with the "*Quod ore sumpsimus*" said in a loud voice.

Q. *Why is the Sacred Host raised?*

A. It is probably a signal that was given to the faithful to come forward for Communion, which in former times used to be given on this day to the faithful.

Q. *What is the origin of the Mass of the Presanctified?*

A. It has its origin probably in the ancient form of administering Holy Communion in private.

Chapter XXV

HOLY SATURDAY

Q. *Was there Mass always celebrated on Holy Saturday?*

A. It was not until the 11th century that Mass was celebrated on Holy Saturday.

Q. *Up to that time in what light was Holy Saturday regarded?*

A. It was regarded as the Sabbath Rest of the Lord in the tomb after His mortal life upon earth. All Christians watched in spirit beside the sepulchre and mourned the death of their Redeemer. It was the stillest day of all the year as it is yet in the Greek and the Russian Church.

Q. *Did any liturgical celebration take place on Holy Saturday?*

A. Not in the morning or early afternoon but in the evening, when the great Vigil of the Resurrection Day began. To this Vigil was closely united the solemn administration of Baptism to the Catechumens after the long and intense preparation of the Lenten season. The Baptismal ceremony occupied most of the night, so that it was early morning before the Mass was celebrated at which the neophytes, the newly-baptised, made their first Communion. The Mass was in reality the Easter Sunday Mass.

Q. *What was the leading thought of this great ceremony as well as of the Holy Saturday ceremony of to-day?*

A. The twofold Resurrection—the Resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the spiritual Resurrection of His Mystical Body.

Q. *Does the present function bear any traces of its being originally held at night time?*

A. In the *Exsultet* " This is the night in which Thou didst bring forth out of Egypt, etc." ; " this then is the night which cleansed the darkness of sin by the light of the pillar " ; " may (this candle) avail and fail not to scatter the darkness of this night " ; " may it be mingled with the lights of heaven (stars)." The Collect of the Mass : " O God, Who didst illustrate this most holy night by the glory of Our Lord's Resurrection." The Preface : " We praise Thee, O Lord, at all times but especially in this night."

Q. *How did the present practice of holding the function in the early morning arise?*

A. When the baptism of adults ceased to be the practice of the Church, when infant baptism became the general rule, and Baptism was conferred throughout the whole year and no longer confined to Holy Saturday and the eve of Pentecost, the special character of the Easter Vigil lost much of its significance. The hour of the ceremony was anticipated at first at noon and subsequently in the early morning.

Q. *How does the Holy Saturday Vigil differ from all other Vigils?*

A. The Holy Saturday Vigil, which was the first of all Vigils, is really an anticipation of the joy of the morrow's festival, while all other Vigils are a preparation for the feast of the morrow.

Q. *Enumerate the constituent parts of the liturgy of Holy Saturday?*

A. 1. The Blessing of the New Fire and of the Incense before the door of the Church.

2. The Blessing of the Paschal Candle.

3. The Prophecies.

4. The Blessing of the Baptismal Font (in parish churches), sometimes followed by the administration of Baptism (in cathedral churches).

5. The Litany of the Saints.

6. The Mass, with which is interwoven the recitation or singing of Vespers.

1 and 2 refer directly to the Risen Christ : 3 and 4 refer directly to the Catechumens—the whole forming one of the most impressive functions of all liturgy, one that brings home to the instructed mind most clearly the reality of our incorporation in Christ, the duties and privileges which that incorporation involves, and the glory to which it leads.

Q. *What is the historic origin of the opening ceremonies?*

A. In preparation for the Vigil service—the church being quite dark—it was customary to strike a flint and have the emitted spark light a candle to illuminate the lectern at which the Vigil Lessons were read. It was the office of the deacon to light the candles for the Vigil service.

Q. *How has this early practice developed?*

A. All the lights in the church are still extinguished, the candles being lighted only for the Mass. Before the ceremony begins at the church door the sacristan, by means of a spark struck from a flint, lights the new fire. A taper is lighted from this new fire after the Blessing. By means of this taper the three candles of the reed borne by the deacon are lighted at different intervals of time on the way up the church. From this reed the Paschal Candle is lighted by the side of the lectern at which the *Exsultet,* "the Paschal Praise," is sung.

1. The New Fire and the Incense

Q. *When was the Blessing of the New Fire introduced into the liturgy?*

A. In the time of Pope Leo IV (+855). It is of Frankish origin, and was introduced to give a Christian

significance to the pagan fires lighted in honour of the Spring-goddess, Eostra (from whom our word Easter gets its name) and of the Sun-god, Balder. Recall the story of St. Patrick's lighting the first Easter fire on the Hill of Slane.

Q. *What is the symbolism of the fire?*

A. The fire or light is the symbol of Christ, Who said: "I am the light of the world." The stone from which the spark is struck also symbolises Christ rising gloriously from the tomb through the stone of the sepulchre.

Q. *Of what does the Blessing of the New Fire consist?*

A. The Blessing which takes place before the door of the church consists of three prayers in which petition is made that "we be inflamed with heavenly desires," "inflamed with the fire of God's brightness," "helped against the fiery darts of the enemy," and "enlightened with heavenly grace."

Q. *To what is the introduction of the Blessing of the grains of incense due?* *

A. Originally the fourth prayer (*Veniat, quæsumus*, "May the abundant outpouring of Thy blessing come") formed the concluding prayer of the Gelasian formula for the Blessing of the Candle, *super hunc incensum*. The word *incensum* came to be regarded as a neuter noun (*super hoc incensum*), and the meaning, "incense," was attached to it—"a *felix culpa*"—a happy fault—that suggested a ceremony rich in meaning.

Q. *What do the grains of incense symbolise?*

A. They symbolise the spices which the holy women brought to embalm the Body of Jesus, and, as placed in the Paschal Candle, they represent the five glorious wounds of Our Risen Lord.

* Introduced in the 12th century.

2. The Blessing of the Paschal Candle

Q. *Describe the next ceremony?*

A. The deacon takes off his violet vestments and puts on white vestments, which signify the joy of Eastertide. He enters the church bearing in his hand the rod with the triple candle, called the reed, and takes a position before the celebrant who winds up the procession to the sanctuary at the head of which is the sub-deacon as cross-bearer. In a Low Mass the priest bears the reed.

Q. *What takes place during the procession?*

A. As soon as the celebrant has entered the church the deacon pauses, lowers the reed to permit of one of the candles being lighted. All kneel down with the deacon as he sings *Lumen Christi* (the Light of Christ), and, having risen, answer *Deo Gratias* (Thanks be to God). The second candle is lighted in the middle of the church with the same ceremony, the *Lumen Christi* being sung in higher pitch; the third candle is lighted in front of the altar, the *Lumen Christi* being sung in still higher pitch. In a Low Mass the priest sings the *Lumen Christi.*

Q. *What does this ceremony signify?*

A. First of all, thanksgiving for the Resurrection. It signifies, too, that through Christ, the Light of the world, the mystery of the Blessed Trinity (symbolised by the triple candle) was made known to the world. To the Catechumens it was significant of the Blessed Trinity, to Whom in Baptism they were to consecrate themselves for ever.

Q. *How is the use of the reed accounted for?*

A. It is said that a number of candles were joined and lighted together to secure that the draught up the church would not readily extinguish the flame

during the course of the procession for the Vigil Office. What was first a material necessity has been elaborated by the Church into a beautiful symbolism.

Q. *When was the reed introduced at the Holy Saturday ceremony?*

A. It was introduced about the 13th century, while the Blessing of the Paschal Candle dates back, it is said, to Apostolic times.

Q. *How is the Blessing of the Paschal Candle performed?*

A. The deacon is blessed by the celebrant as he is blessed before saying the Gospel at Solemn High Mass. Accompanied by the sub-deacon and acolytes he proceeds to the lectern on the Gospel side, incenses the Missal and begins the *Exsultet.*

Q. *What is the Exsultet?*

A. It is the " Paschal Praise," the first word of which is *Exsultet*—the formula of Blessing of the Paschal Candle.

Q. *What is known of the composition of the Exsultet?*

A. The Paschal Praise was at first the impromptu composition of the deacon. The present form has been in use since the 7th century, and St. Augustine is claimed to be its author. Seldom does there occur in the liturgy such a combination of " holy inspiration, exsultant joy, beauty of language, depth of thought, such majesty and power." The music of it matches the style.

Q. *Of what does the Blessing consist?*

A. It consists: 1. Of a joyful announcement of the victory of Jesus Christ Our King and of an invitation to express our joy in His victory.

2. Of an elaborate Preface (the common form of all the solemn Blessings and Consecrations of the liturgy).

3. Of a prayer for all the servants of God, the clergy,

the Pope and the bishop, that God may ever rule and guide and keep them under His protection. The prayer for the Emperor is now omitted, as the Holy Roman Empire has ceased to be.

Q. *Is there any other instance of a solemn Blessing being imparted by a deacon?*

A. The Blessing of the Paschal Candle stands unique in that respect.

Q. *What special ceremonies take place during the singing of the Exsultet?*

A. 1. After the words, *curvat imperia* ("it curbs haughtiness") the deacon fixes the grains of incense in the candle in the form of a cross.

2. After the words, *Rutilans ignis accendit* ("which God's bright flame enkindles") the deacon lights the Paschal Candle with one of the three candles on the reed.

3. After the words *apis mater eduxit* ("which the mother bee wrought") the sanctuary lamps are lighted.

Q. *What does the Paschal Candle symbolise?*

A. It symbolises Christ, the Light of the world—the wax symbolises His Body, His Virginal Flesh; the wick signifies His Soul; the flame signifies His Divinity.

Q. *On what occasions is the Paschal Candle lighted?*

A. It is lighted at Solemn Mass and Vespers (1) on Holy Saturday, Easter Sunday, Monday and Tuesday and on Low Saturday; (2) on the Sundays after Easter up to the fifth Sunday inclusive, and (3) at a parochial or community Low Mass on the days that have been mentioned.

It is extinguished after the Gospel on Ascension Thursday, and used but once again—at the Blessing of the Baptismal font on the Vigil of Pentecost.

3. The Prophecies

Q. *Is there a notable change after the conclusion of the "Exsultet"?*

A. The joyous vestment of the deacon is laid aside and the three sacred ministers (or the priest at a Low Mass) assume the full Mass vestments of violet colour and proceed to the altar for the recitation of the twelve Prophecies by the celebrant.

At a lectern placed on the Epistle side of the choir twelve lectors in turn sing the Prophecies at a Solemn High Mass. In a Low Mass the Prophecies are simply recited by the celebrant.

Q. *How is this portion of the ceremony arranged?*

A. Each prophecy is followed by a Collect, and each group of four Prophecies is followed in addition by a Tract.

Q. *What is the purpose of the Prophecies?*

A. To instruct the Catechumens on the significance and consequence of the Baptism they are about to receive and to remind the faithful of the greatness of the grace bestowed on them in Baptism.

Q. *Why are they called Prophecies?*

A. A number of them are taken from the Prophets, while all point to the Baptism that is to follow.

Q. *Is there anything of special note in the Collect?*

A. The Collects of Holy Saturday are probably the most striking that occur in the liturgy. Each one brings vividly to the mind the force of the preceding prophecy, and their various petitions illustrate in wondrous wise the effects of the Sacrament of Baptism.

Q. *With what do the Prophecies deal?*

A. 1. The creation of man. 2. The Flood. 3. The Sacrifice of Abraham. 4. The Passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. 5. The call of Isaias announcing

the inheritance reserved for the children of adoption. 6. The Exhortation of Baruch to the Jews to seek that wisdom which comes from God. 7. The Vision of Ezechiel, an image of the Regeneration in Jesus Christ "by the Holy Ghost." 8. The Fruit of the Redemption as prophesied by Isaias (c. 4). 9. The Paschal Lamb: It is the Blood of the Lamb that will save the Catechumens from the danger of eternal death. 10. The conversion and salvation of the Ninivites. 11. The parting words of Moses suggesting to the Catechumens the need of fidelity to the law of God and of gratitude for His benefits. 12. The youths in the fiery furnace: Christ in Baptism will save the Catechumens from the pool of fire and reinvigorate them in the fire of persecution.

4. The Blessing of the Baptismal Font

Q. *What follows upon the Prophecies?*

A. The celebrant once more resumes the cope and all three sacred ministers remove their maniples for the procession to the Baptismal Font. The Paschal Candle is borne in front of the procession like the pillar of fire that led the Israelites through the Red Sea—a rescue from slavery typifying Baptism, which is a rescue from the slavery of sin. During the progress of the procession the Tract—Ps. 41—*Sicut cervus* ("As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, etc.")—is sung, and at the door of the baptistery the celebrant recites a prayer which is a commentary upon the psalm. The celebrant then goes to the font.

Q. *Describe the Blessing of the Font or Baptismal water?*

A. The priest recalls at first in a magnificent Preface the marvels God has worked by the element of water—

[The Spirit of God in the very beginning of the world moved upon the waters; by the deluge He washed away the crimes of a guilty world]. He then divides the water in the form of a cross invoking God to fill it with the virtue of the Holy Spirit and to make it fruitful by His grace. He touches the water with his hand, praying it may become a living fountain; makes the sign of the Cross three times over it in blessing; divides the water with his hand and throws some of it towards the four quarters of the earth. He breathes three times over the water in the form of a cross, conjuring Jesus Christ to bless it. He dips the Paschal Candle three times into the font, saying each time: "May the power of the Holy Ghost descend into all the water of this font." Then he breathes three times on the water in the form of the Greek letter ψ. The water—the true Easter water—is then sprinkled over the people by an attendant priest.

Finally, the celebrant mixes Oil of Catechumens and Oil of Chrism—which are blessed on Holy Thursday for this very purpose—with the baptismal water.

Q. *Why does the priest touch the water with his hand?*

A. To reserve as it were the water for sacred use and to sanctify it by his priestly power.

Q. *Why does the priest divide the water and throw some of it towards the four quarters of the earth?*

A. In memory of the words: "Go, preach the Gospel to every nation," and to signify that all men are called to Baptism.

Q. *What is the symbolism of dipping the Paschal Candle into the water?*

A. The Paschal Candle symbolises Christ, Who sanctified the waters of the river Jordan by descending into them at His Baptism by St. John the Baptist; and as upon that occasion the Holy Ghost descended in

the form of a dove, so here the Holy Ghost is invoked that His power may descend upon the waters of the font.

Q. *What is the symbolism of breathing over the font in the form of the Greek letter* ψ (ps) ?

A. As this letter *ps* is the first letter of the Greek word, *psyche* (the soul), it would seem that the priest breathes life into the water after the analogy of the creation of man. ("God breathed into His face the breath of life." Genesis ii. 7.)

Q. *What is the significance of mixing the two holy oils with the water?*

A. To indicate the union of Jesus Christ with His people and to show that the grace of the Holy Spirit is communicated to the soul of the baptised with the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity.

Q. *Why should this ceremony of Blessing the Font be a subject of special study?*

A. Because all the effects of Baptism are admirably expressed in the prayers of this Blessing and represented in the ceremonies which accompany it. For all the faithful this ceremony should be a grateful reminder of the wondrous gift of grace received at Baptism, a new awakening within them of love of Christ, and a fresh inspiration to realise in their life the ideals of Christian faith and Christian moral conduct. Easter celebrations should be for us all a time for the renewal of our baptismal vows and of our closer incorporation in Christ through our rising to a newer and higher life of grace in union with Him.

5. The Litany of the Saints

Q. *When is the Litany of the Saints recited?*

A. After the Blessing of the Font. The procession is reformed and, while all return to the High Altar, the

Litany of the Saints is recited or sung after the manner of the procession on Station days in the long ago.

Q. *What is to be noted in this Litany?*

A. It is shorter than the ordinary Litany of the Saints, and each invocation and petition are repeated. It is a petition for the newly-baptised and an appeal to the Church Triumphant to help the Church Militant—an expression of the doctrine of the Communion of Saints.

Q. *What do the sacred ministers do when they reach the choir?*

A. The celebrant takes off his cope, the deacon and sub-deacon take off their folded chasubles, and all three prostrate at the altar while the singing or recitation of the Litany proceeds. At the first *Te rogamus, audi nos* ("we beseech thee, hear us"), the three rise, proceed to the sacristy, and put on white vestments in preparation for the Mass.

6. The Mass and Vespers

Q. *How does the Mass fit into all the previous ceremonial?*

A. The unity of thought is preserved to the end. The Church hastens to offer up a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for the new children that have been born of her bosom. The Mass is intended for the neophytes, who attend it clad in their white garments, "in the snow-white robes of state," which they wear during the whole succeeding week. In this Mass they make their first Communion, having been confirmed after their Baptism. Having risen from the dead with Christ in their Baptism they now receive for the first time the special pledge of their future resurrection upon the Last Day.

Q. *What are the special characteristics of this Mass?*

A. It has no Introit, no Offertory, no *Agnus Dei*, no Pax, no *Communio*. The *Kyrie* of the Litany sung by the choir is the *Kyrie* of the Mass. Candles are not borne at the singing of the Gospel.

Q. *What special ceremonies are introduced into this Mass?*

A. At the *Gloria in excelsis Deo* the church and the Sanctus bells that have been silent since the *Gloria* on Holy Thursday are rung, the violet coverings are taken from the pictures and statues that were hidden from view since Vespers of Passion Sunday; the joyous Alleluia, that had not sounded in the church since Septuagesima, rings out in jubilant tone sung three times—each time in higher pitch—by the celebrant, and taken up each time by the choir. When the Vigil began in the evening time this Alleluia used to be sung at the very moment Our Lord was supposed to have risen from the tomb. The sadness and sorrowing of Passiontide have passed giving way to the exultant gladness and joy over Christ's Resurrection and our rising to a new life with Him.

Q. *When was the recitation of Vespers introduced?*

A. The recitation of Vespers dates from the time when the celebration of the Vigil was anticipated in the morning and became one with the Mass—the Vesper prayer serving as the Post-communion. It is the shortest Vespers of the whole liturgical year, coming, as it does, at the close of one of the longest ceremonies of the whole liturgy.

Chapter XXVI

EASTERTIDE

Q. *Over what period of time does Eastertide extend?*

A. It lasts fifty-six days, from Easter Saturday till first Vespers of the Saturday of Pentecost Quarter Tense, that is, the Saturday before Trinity Sunday.

Q. *Into what three sections may it be divided?*

A. 1. From Easter to the Feast of the Ascension, which we may call the period of the Resurrection, the forty days during which Christ lived on earth after the Resurrection.

2. From the Feast of the Ascension to the Vigil of Pentecost—the period of the Ascension.

3. The Vigil of Pentecost, the Feast of Pentecost and its Octave.

Q. *What is the chief characteristic of Eastertide?*

A. It is a time of spiritual joy. It symbolises the joys of Heaven. The joy of Eastertide is a foretaste of eternal happiness.

Q. *What is the source of that joy?*

A. Christ's victory in His Resurrection over sin and death and hell:

> "To Thee, who dead, again dost live,
> All glory, Lord, thy people give."

and our triumph in Christ:

> "Thy captive people are set free,
> And endless life restored in Thee."
>
> (Vesper Hymn of Eastertide.)

The Resurrection is the foundation of the Christian faith, and with Christ we are all risen.

Q. *How was that joy exemplified in early Christian practice?*

A. Easter with its Octave was one long holiday of obligation, during which no servile work was allowed. Prisoners were pardoned, slaves were granted their freedom, and the rich gave bounteous alms to the poor, so that Easter joy was in the "widest commonalty spread."

Q. *How does this joy find expression in the Masses of Eastertide?*

A. In the ever-recurring Alleluia, an echo, like the Sanctus, of the Angels' song. Two Alleluias are added to each Introit and one to each Offertory and *Communio*, and the Alleluiatic verse after Easter Octave replaces the Gradual. The *Gloria in excelsis* is said at the ferial Masses of the period, and white vestments are worn, the symbol of joy.

Q. *When were the great feasts of Eastertide established?*

A. The feasts of Easter and Pentecost were well established by the 2nd century, the Octave of Easter in the 4th century, the Octave of Pentecost in the 9th century, and the Feast of the Ascension in the 4th century.

Easter and its Octave

Q. *What is the origin of our word Easter?*

A. It is derived from the Anglo-Saxon name, *Eostra*, the goddess of the dawn and of spring, in whose honour in pagan times fires of joy were lighted at about the spring equinox.

Q. *What is its liturgical name?*

A. The Sunday of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Q. *How is it described in the liturgical book called the Martyrology?*

A. "This is the day which the Lord hath made. This day is the most solemn of all solemnities. This day is our Pasch. Upon this day did Our Saviour Jesus Christ, according to the flesh, rise again from the dead."

Q. *What is the meaning of the word Pasch?*

A. It comes from the Greek word *pascha*, which is derived from the Hebrew *pesach*, meaning Passover. The Jewish people celebrated the passing over of the destroying angel and their rescue from the slavery of Egypt, while the Christian Pasch celebrates the rescue of the human race from the slavery of Satan and of sin, and of its restoration to the freedom of the children of God. "Christ is the true lamb Who hath taken away the sins of the world; Who, by dying, hath overcome our death, and by rising again hath restored our life" (Easter Preface).

Q. *How is the date of Easter Sunday calculated?*

A. It is the Sunday which follows the full Paschal moon, that is, the Sunday which occurs after the full moon following the 21st of March, the date of the spring equinox. Therefore it cannot fall earlier than the 22nd March nor later than the 25th April.

Q. *What is to be noted about the Masses of this week?*

A. They bear numerous reference to the neophytes or newly-baptised, who, clad in their white garments, put on them in baptism, attended all the Station Masses of this week. *Cf.*, the Introit of Monday and Tuesday, the Collect of Tuesday and of Thursday, the Offertory of Wednesday, and the many references to the passage of the Red Sea (symbolic of Baptism), the manna, the Paschal Lamb, the land flowing with milk and honey.

Q. *What is the origin of the present Easter Sunday Mass?*

A. It occupies the place of the former second Mass of Easter day. The first Mass at midnight or early dawn, which is now the Mass of Holy Saturday, was intended for the neophytes, the second Mass in broad daylight applied rather to the general faithful.

Q. *Is there any special feature in the Mass and the Mass of the Octave?*

A. The Sequence, the *Victimæ Paschali**—one of five preserved in the Roman Missal.

Q. *Who is the author of this Sequence?*

A. The authorship, which is not quite definitely established, is generally attributed to Wipo (+ 1050), court chaplain to the Emperors Conrad II and Henry III.

Q. *What important truth does it imply?*

A. What is so much insisted upon—that the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Our Saviour constitute one whole—the Christian Pasch:

> "Together death and life
> In a strange conflict strive;
> The Prince of life, Who died
> Now lives and reigns."

Q. *What is to be noted about the Post-communion of the Easter Sunday Mass?*

A. During the whole Eastertide it replaces the "*Deus qui nobis sub sacramento mirabili*" when Holy Communion is administered in the church outside the Mass.

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* The beginning of the modern drama is traced by Courthope to the use of the *Victimæ Paschali* in the *Sepulchri Officium* (the Office of the Sepulchre) and to the representations thence developed.

Q. *What is the lesson to be learned from it?*

A. That the active participation in the Mass effects the loving communion of all the faithful in Christ and with one another.

Q. *When does the Octave end?*

A. It ends with the canonical hour of *None* on Saturday.

Q. *Enumerate some of the popular practices adopted at Easter time.*

A. The Blessing of meat and of eggs, which were forbidden during the Lent. The Blessing of the Paschal Lamb is the most familiar example.

Q. *What is the liturgical name for the First Sunday after Easter?*

A. *Dominica in Albis* (*depositis*), *i.e.* the Sunday on which the white garments were discarded. The Neophytes doffed their white garments on Saturday at the close of the Octave and appeared in church on Low Sunday in their ordinary dress.

It is also called "Quasimodo" Sunday from the first two words of the Introit.

Q. *What is its most familiar name?*

A. Low Sunday. The word "low"—arrived at by the clipping of the initial letter of the word "close"—comes from the Latin *clausum* in the phrase *Pascha clausum* (the close of the Pasch). But it is more likely that the popular name has arisen from the contrast between the joys of Easter and the first return to ordinary Sunday services.

Q. *How is the Second Sunday after Easter called?*

A. It is called "Good Shepherd Sunday" from the Gospel of the day. In the early centuries before the Crucifix became the favourite symbol of our faith, the Christians of the Catacombs loved to depict Our Divine Lord as the Good Shepherd seeking the lost sheep and

bearing the lamb on His shoulders. It made a tender appeal to their trusting hearts, and should arouse us likewise to admiration for the gentleness and loveliness of the Good, or rather, of the "Beautiful" Shepherd of our souls.

The Rogation Days

Q. *When do the Rogation Days occur?*

A. They occur on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before Ascension Thursday, *i.e.* within the fifth week after Easter.

Q. *Why is the name Rogation given to them?*

A. Because on these days special petitions (*rogationes*) are offered up to God by the recitation of the Litany of the Saints, supplemented in some places by the holding of a penitential procession.

Q. *When were the Rogation days instituted?*

A. They were first introduced at Vienne (Dauphiné) by Bishop Mamertus in 469, when a great plague was destroying his flock. They were adopted in the Roman liturgy in the time of Leo III (+ 816).

Q. *What are the Litanies of the Rogation days called?*

A. They are known as the minor Litanies to distinguish them from the major (greater) Litanies said on the 25th April. The latter were introduced into Rome before the Litanies of the Rogation days, and are therefore of "greater" age.

The same Litany of the Saints is said on all four days, and is of obligation on all those who are bound to the recitation of the Divine Office.

Q. *What is the purpose of the minor Litanies?*

A. The twofold purpose is expressed in the Epistle of Rogation Monday—to pray for favourable weather for the crops and for the remission of our own sins and the sins of others.

Q. *What is the origin of the major Litanies?*

A. They were introduced to supplant a pagan festival which used to be held on the 25th April to propitiate Robigus, the evil deity who brought mildew upon the corn.

The Period of the Ascension

Q. *When was the Feast of the Ascension introduced into the liturgy of the Church?*

A. It was well-established in the 4th century. Its Vigil dates from the 9th century, and its Octave from the 10th.

Q. *What is the importance of this mystery in the Life of Our Lord?*

A. It accomplishes the supreme glorification of Christ: Christ takes His place at the right hand of the Father, Sharer of His Throne and Partaker of His Glory.

Q. *What is the importance of this mystery in our regard?*

A. Christ "was lifted up that we might become partakers of His divinity" (Preface of the Mass). Christ is the Head and we are the members. "This day," says Pope St. Leo the Great in the Office of the day, "not only is the possession of Paradise made over to us, but in the person of our Head we have actually begun to enter into the heavenly mansions above." Christ has prepared a place for us in heaven. One by one we ascend to it, if while we are here on earth we fight the good fight:

> "There waiting for the faithful souls
> Be thou to us, O Lord,
> Our joy of joys, while here we stay—
> In heaven our great reward."
>
> (Hymn of Matins.)

Q. *How is the special grace of the feast expressed in the Collect?*

A. "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, as we do believe Thine only begotten Son to have ascended into the heavens this day, so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend and with Him eternally dwell."

Q. *How is the fact of the Ascension symbolised in the ceremonies of the day?*

A. The Paschal Candle, which symbolises Christ, is extinguished after the Gospel of the day, in which we are told of the departure of Christ from this earth and of His Ascension into heaven.

Chapter XXVII

PENTECOST

Q. *What is the meaning of the word Pentecost?*

A. Pentecost comes from the Greek word, *pentecoste* (*hemera*), meaning fiftieth (day), the Feast of Pentecost being celebrated on the fiftieth day after Easter.

Q. *Why is the Feast of Pentecost called Whit Sunday?*

A. Whit stands for white, and the name White Sunday was given to the feast on account of the white garments worn by the neophytes who had been baptised on the Vigil (*cf.*, the liturgical name for Low Sunday, *Dominica in Albis*).

Q. *What is the origin of the feast?*

A. The Jews celebrated the harvest-feast at the conclusion of seven weeks from the offering of the wave-sheaf on second day of Passover. The fiftieth day was subsequently celebrated in addition as the anniversary of the promulgation of the ten commandments from Mount Sinai.

Q. *How is the feast regarded in the Church's liturgy?*

A. The Church celebrates on this day the visible sending of the Holy Ghost to the disciples together with the establishment of the Church founded by Christ on Peter. It is, thus, a harvest-feast of Christ in the highest sense, for this day witnessed the birth of His Kingdom upon earth. Henceforth the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, the Soul of the Church, assists and guides the Church and guards it from error. This day a new Lawgiver, the Spirit of God, descends upon the hearts of men.

Q. *Why is this feast considered as a mystery of Christ's?*

A. The coming of the Holy Ghost was the necessary complement of Christ's work of Redemption, "Who (Christ) going up above all the heavens and sitting at Thy right hand on this day sent forth the Holy Ghost, as He had promised, on the children of adoption" (Preface of the feast). In His Ascension Christ prepared for us a place in heaven. He sent the Holy Ghost to teach us how to gain that place and to strengthen us in our earthly struggle towards it. "He will teach you all truth" (John xvi. 13); "And I send the promise of my Father upon you: but stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 49).

Q. *In what sense is the mystery ours?*

A. The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Apostles and Disciples who "stayed in the city" for the coming of the Holy Ghost represented the whole Church. The Spirit of God abides with that Church for ever, and we, as members of that Church, are subject to His guidance and sanctifying power. The Spirit of God dwells in us as in His Temple. "Without Thy Godhead nothing can Have any price or worth in man: Nothing can harmless be" (Sequence).

Q. *In what terms does the Church invoke the Holy Ghost in the Mass of Pentecost Sunday?*

A. "Send forth thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and thou shalt renew the face of the earth. Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of thy faithful and kindle in them the fire of thy love" (Alleluiatic Verse):

"Oh, come, thou Father of the poor,
Oh, come thou source of all our store:
Come, fill our hearts with love.
. . . . . .
Oh, blessed light of life Thou art,
Fill with Thy light the inmost hearts
Of those that hope in Thee" (Sequence).

"May our hearts be cleansed, O Lord, by the in-pouring of the Holy Ghost" (Post-communion).

Q. *To what conclusion do these petitions lead?*

A. That the mystery of the coming of the Holy Ghost is renewed in us interiorly during the holy days of Pentecost.

The Feast of Pentecost should remind us yearly of our Confirmation when we received the Holy Ghost in an especial manner and evoke in us a spirit of thanks-giving for the wondrous graces and gifts of that great Sacrament.

Q. *How is the Sequence of the Masses of this feast and its Octave called?*

A. In the Middle Ages it was known as the "Golden Sequence," for its beauty and simplicity constitute it one of the masterpieces of sacred song. In it the Church declares its faith in the Divine promises and prays for the perpetual coming of the Holy Ghost Who is its life. No more effective and inspiring prayer to the Holy Ghost can be committed to memory.

Its authorship is attributed to Pope Innocent III (+1216), or to Stephen Langton, Cardinal-Archbishop of Canterbury (+ 1228).

Q. *What is the liturgical colour proper to Pentecost?*

A. Red, which is the symbol of fire and of love.

Q. *How is the Feast of Pentecost introduced?*

A. By the privileged Vigil of Pentecost—a day that, like Holy Saturday, was set apart for the Baptism of Catechumens.

Q. *What survival of this ancient ordinance is extant?*

A. The Blessing of the Font which takes place in every parochial church on this day. The ceremony of Blessing is the same as that of Holy Saturday.

Q. *What is of special note regarding the Introit of the Vigil Mass?*

A. If Mass follows upon the Blessing of the Font there is no Introit, otherwise the Introit (*Cum sanctificatus fuero*) to be found in the Missal after the Post-communion of the Vigil is recited.

Q. *When does the festival of Pentecost conclude?*

A. After the recitation of the canonical hour of *None* on the Saturday after Pentecost Sunday—and with the conclusion of that festival the Paschal Cycle closes. With the Descent of the Holy Ghost the great work of man's Redemption is completed, the historical and sanctifying drama of the world's salvation is fully presented.

The Period after Pentecost

Q. *How is the remainder of the liturgical year named?*

A. It is called the period after Pentecost. The Sundays are described as Sundays after Pentecost—the First, Second, Third Sunday, etc., after Pentecost. There is no special cycle centring round a great feast or mystery.

Q. *What does the period symbolise?*

A. The period after Pentecost symbolises man's pilgrimage on earth till the second coming of Christ on the day of Judgment. The description of Christ's coming in judgment, given in the Gospel of the last Sunday after Pentecost, rounds off the period.

Q. *What is the special purpose of the Sunday Masses of this period?*

A. To lead us to the imitation of Christ and to the preparation for eternal life.

Q. *What general relation does this period bear to Pentecost Sunday?*

A. During this period we witness the working of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in individual souls.

Q. *What is the liturgical colour of this period?*

A. Green, which is the symbol of hope. Through the operation of the Holy Spirit the faithful look forward with confidence to the second advent of Christ, and hope for the eternal reward He will confer on His good and faithful servants.

Q. *Over how many weeks may this period extend?*

A. It may last from 23 to 28 weeks, according to the date on which Easter Sunday falls.

At one time the Sundays of this period were arranged into groups attached to the leading feasts :—Sundays after SS. Peter and Paul, Sundays after the Feast of St. Lawrence (the Mass of the Tenth Sunday after Pentecost bears striking traces of its former connection with this martyr's feast), Sundays after the Feast of St. Cyprian, after the Feast of St. Michael.

When the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity was attached in the 14th century to the First Sunday after Pentecost, the remaining Sundays were counted as Sundays after Trinity Sunday in some countries, e.g. in Germany, but the older enumeration of the Sundays was continued in Rome and now prevails throughout the Catholic Church.

Q. *What is to be noted in the Masses of the period?*

A. 1. The Collects are amongst the best to be found in the Missal for style and for thought. To give one or two examples : the Collect for the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost is a veritable treatise on prayer ; the Collect for the Tenth Sunday brings out in wondrous wise the infinite mercy of God and the ideal that men should pursue.

2. The proper Preface of these Sundays (called technically Sundays *per annum*, literally, throughout the year) is the Preface of Trinity Sunday.

). This period took some centuries to develop, and for a long period of time there were not distinct Masses for each Sunday. And even now on the Sundays from the 23rd on, the same chants are used—the same Introit, Gradual, Offertory and *Communio* (*v.* p. 213, Sundays after Epiphany).

Chapter XXVIII

FEASTS OF THE CHURCH

Q. *What is understood by a liturgical feast?*

A. A feast is a special day set apart for the liturgical commemoration of the Most Holy Trinity, of some event or mystery in Our Lord's life, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of the Angels, or of the Saints.

Q. *How are feasts classified?*

(1) Immovable or movable ;
(2) of precept or devotion ;
(3) of different rites, that is, of double, semi-double, or simple rite.

Q. *What are immovable feasts?*

A. Feasts that occur on fixed days of the calendar year (e.g. Feast of Christmas).

Q. *What are movable feasts?*

A. Easter, which changes with the date of the Paschal moon, and such feasts as vary with the date of Easter (e.g. the Feast of Pentecost).

Q. *How are feasts of precept distinguished from feasts of devotion merely?*

A. To feasts of precept is attached the obligation of attending Mass and of abstaining from unnecessary servile work, while no such obligation is attached to feasts of devotion. On these days of devotion we are recommended to join in the special religious honours paid to the mystery or personage that is being celebrated.

Q. *What is meant by the term "rite" in the phrase "feast of double rite"?*

A. The rite signifies the degree of solemnity or of dignity attaching to the feast.

Q. *Account for the use of the term "double."*

A. Historically the term double is accounted for by the fact that in earlier times, on days on which special feasts occurred, a double Office was recited—one of the feast and another of the ferial (that is, of the regular Office of the week-day).

A characteristic of the double Office is that the antiphons of the psalms of the Office are doubled, that is, recited in full before and after the psalms ; while in the semi-double and simple rite the antiphon is recited in full only at the conclusion of the psalm, the first words (or first half) of the antiphon being recited before the beginning of the psalm.

Q. *How is the double rite subdivided?*

A. There are four classes of doubles corresponding to four varying degrees of solemnity, viz. :—doubles of the first class—the highest feasts of all, doubles of the second class, major doubles and minor doubles. These latter are called doubles simply.

Q. *What is an Octave?*

A. An Octave is the continuous celebration of a feast for eight days, including the festival day itself (e.g. the Feast of Easter), or the celebration of a feast on the eight day after the festival (e.g. the Octave of St. Stephen, Protomartyr).

Q. *What is a ferial?*

A. A ferial is a week-day to which no feast or vigil of a feast happens to be assigned.

Q. *How are the Sundays classified?*

A. 1. Into major Sundays, consisting of the Sundays of the first class—as the Sundays of Lent, and of Sundays of the second class—as Septuagesima ; and (2) into minor Sundays—such as the Sundays after Pentecost.

Q. *What feast is celebrated on the First Sunday after Pentecost?*

A. The Feast of the Most Holy Trinity. The Church, as it were, turns its gaze from the history of man's Redemption and, illumined by the light of supernatural faith, looks into the very depths of the Godhead.

Q. *How may we regard this special feast?*

A. As the summation of all the feasts of the liturgical year; for our Redemption through Christ is the work of all Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, *who according to the will of Thy Father didst by Thy death, through the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, give life to the world*" (the second prayer after the *Agnus Dei* of the Mass).

Q. *What are the chief characteristics of the Mass of this day?*

A. The trembling awe and reverence with which it approaches the consideration of the Blessed Trinity: "O, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments and how unsearchable His ways!" (the Epistle); praise for the unfathomable mystery: "Blessed are Thou, O Lord, Who beholdest the depths and sittest upon the cherubim . . . praise for ever" (Gradual).

Q. *When was the feast introduced into the general calendar of the Church?*

A. Though a votive Mass in honour of the Blessed Trinity had existed for some centuries before, it was not until the 14th century that the special feast in honour of the Blessed Trinity was definitely established.

Q. *What two other feasts vary with the date of Pentecost, or rather of Easter?*

A. The Feast of *Corpus Christi*, which falls upon the

Thursday after Trinity Sunday, and the Feast of the Sacred Heart, which falls on the Friday which follows the Octave day of *Corpus Christi*.

Q. *What is particularly appropriate in the choice of the day on which the Feast of Corpus Christi falls?*

A. A Thursday is chosen because Thursday is specially dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament; for it was on a Thursday that the Blessed Sacrament was instituted. Thursday after the Octave of Pentecost is chosen in order to afford the faithful an opportunity of celebrating, in a special manner, the institution of the Blessed Eucharist at the recurrence of that period of the year, when the Holy Ghost illumined the hearts of the disciples with a full knowledge of this wondrous mystery, and when the faithful began to frequent the altar.

Cf. Office of Friday within the Octave of Corpus Christi—Lessons of the second Nocturn from a sermon of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Q. *What is the object of the Feast of Corpus Christi?*

A. To celebrate the institution of the Blessed Sacrament and to make reparation for the coldness and indifference shown to Our Divine Lord present upon our altars.

The institution of the Blessed Sacrament is commemorated on Holy Thursday, which was once known as the *Natalis Calicis* (the Birthday of the Chalice), but its commemoration became overshadowed by the consecration of the oils and the other ceremonies of that day. Again, to quote the Encyclical of Pius XI, *Quas Primas*, referring to the time of the institution of this feast: "It was a time when reverence and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament had grown cold, and the feast was instituted that men might be brought once more to render public homage to the Lord."

Q. *What special circumstances furthered its institution?*

A. The revelations of Blessed Juliana of Liège and the famous miracle of Bolsena, in which a Sacred Host empurpled the corporal during Mass, had much to do with the introduction of this feast by Urban IV in 1264.

Q. *What is the leading thought in the liturgy of the feast?*

A. That suggested by the well-known versicle and response after the *Tantum Ergo* of the Benediction Service: "*Panem de cœlo, etc.*": "Thou hast given them bread from heaven, having in itself all sweetness." All the hymns emphasise the incomprehensible paradox that the King of Glory gives Himself as food to frail mankind:

> "O wondrous gift indeed!
> The poor and lowly may
> Upon their Lord and Master feed."
> —(Hymn, *Sacris Solemniis*, of Matins of the Feast.)

The familiar *Tantum Ergo* and *O Salutaris Hostia*, which constitute the concluding stanzas of the *Pange, lingua, gloriosi* (Sing, my tongue, the Saviour's glory)—the Vesper hymn of the feast—and of the *Verbum Supernum prodiens* (the Heav'nly Word proceeding forth)—the Hymn of Lauds—respectively, suggest some of the chief thoughts of the liturgy of the feast.

Q. *By whom were the Mass and Office of Corpus Christi composed?*

A. By St. Thomas of Aquin (+ 1274), the Angel of the Schools, and the greatest theologian of the Church. The Sequence of the Mass, *Lauda, Sion, Salvatorem* (Praise, O Sion, praise thy Saviour), which is based note by note and syllable by syllable on the *Laudes crucis attollamus* of Adam de Saint Victor (+ 1192), is as remarkable for its perfect exposition of the dogmatic

teaching on the Blessed Eucharist as for the conciseness of its phrasing and the elevation of its thought.

Q. *When was the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament introduced?*

A. Not until fifteen years after the introduction of the feast. No mention of procession is made in the Bull, *Transiturus*, in which Pope Urban IV established the feast. The special acts inculcated in this Bull were active participation in the Holy Mass and assistance at the public recital of the Divine Office. Active participation in the Holy Mass is the highest and most fruitful form of devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament.

Q. *Is it incumbent on the faithful to take part in the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament?*

A. All, without exception, ought to take an active part in the Procession associated with the Corpus Christi celebrations. It is an act of adoring homage and of loving reparation offered up by the whole community with one voice, one mind and one heart.

> "Let flesh and heart and lips and mind
> Sound forth our witness to mankind."
>
> (Hymn of Terce.)

Q. *What great Christian ideal should this procession inspire in us?*

A. To assist at the weekly (or daily) celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with the same unity of spirit, the same vivid consciousness of our religious life in common, the same keen perception of our united offering up of praise and glory to God. As members of the Mystical Body of Christ we are bound together, through our incorporation in Christ, by spiritual ties that create a higher kinship than that which exists between brethren of the flesh. With the practical realisation of this truth, as has been insisted on so often,

would come the "restoration of all things in Christ" and the "peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ."

Q. *What is the object of devotion to the Sacred Heart?*

A. To adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus in recognition of His love and in reparation of our own and others' ingratitude, more particularly in reparation of the coldness and ingratitude shown to Him present in the Sacrament of Love. "The spread of the devotion to the Sacred Heart," says Pius XI in his Encyclical, *Quas primas*, "was due to a reaction against the sad and gloomy austerity of Jansenism, which had deterred men from the love of God and trust in salvation."

Q. **What is the origin of the present Feast of the Sacred Heart?*

A. The request made by Our Divine Lord when He appeared to St. Margaret Mary within the Octave of Corpus Christi in the year 1675. Disclosing His Sacred Heart to her, He said: "Behold this Heart which has loved men so much, and which receives in return, for the most part, nothing but ingratitude, contempt, irreverence and sacrilege. I ask you, therefore, to have the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi set apart as a special feast in honour of My Heart."

The feast was successively established in different dioceses, and in 1856, at the request of the Bishops of France, it was extended to the Universal Church, and raised to the dignity of a secondary double of the first class by Pope Leo XIII in 1889.

Q. *What is the main theme of the Mass "Miserebitur" of the Feast?*

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* St. John Eudes, "the author of the liturgical cult of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary," had established a Feast of the Sacred Heart for his two orders of men and of women in 1646. Two years later, the Mass he had composed for the Feast was celebrated in the Cathedral Church of Autun.

A. The Mass is full of the thought of Jesus suffering and dying ; for His dying upon the Cross was the highest proof of the love of the Sacred Heart for us, and the bitter agony of His death is most calculated to awaken our love, our gratitude and our spirit of reparation.

" Who would not love in return one, loving him ? who redeemed, would not love (Him) and choose in that Heart an everlasting dwelling." (Hymn of Lauds of the Feast.)

Q. *What is the next outstanding feast of Our Lord ?*

A. The Feast of the Kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ, established by Pope Pius XI, now gloriously reigning, on 12th December, 1925, and celebrated on the last Sunday of October, the Sunday before the Feast of All Saints.

Q. *Against what specific evils of our time is the establishment of this new feast mainly directed ?*

A. 1. The denial of Christ's authority to rule all nations,

2. The denial of the right of the Church to teach the human race, to make laws, to rule over peoples unto their eternal salvation,

3. The putting of the religion of Christ on a footing with false religions,

4. The putting of the religion of Christ under civil authority,

5. The setting up of a natural religion in place of the Divine religion,

6. Impiety and neglect of God,

with their attendant evils of enmities and rivalries between nations, of insatiable greed under the disguise of public spirit and patriotism, of discord and division between citizens, of blind unrestrained self-love, which

makes private gain and private advantage its one aim and universal standard, of unhappiness in homes through neglect of domestic responsibilities, of the loss of stability in family life—all leading to the total destruction of human society (*Encyclical Quas Primas*).

Q. *What, in brief, is the object of the Feast?*

A. To stamp out the plague of anti-clericalism and secularism which infests modern society, to bring men back to Christ, and thereby to establish " the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ," the ideal the Holy Father sets before the world.

Q. *Why is a new feast of Christ's Kingship established in addition to other feasts in which His Kingly Dignity is signified and celebrated* (e.g. *the Feast of the Epiphany*)*?*

A. Although in all the feasts of Our Lord the material object of worship is Christ, nevertheless their formal object is something entirely distinct from His royal title and dignity.

Q. *Why is a Sunday chosen for the feast?*

A. In order that not only the clergy may perform their duty by saying Mass and reciting the Office, but that the laity, too, free from their daily occupations, may in a spirit of holy joy give ample testimony of their obedience and subjection to Christ.

Q. *Why is the last Sunday of October chosen?*

A. Because it occurs towards the close of the liturgical year, and thus the Feast of the Kingship of Christ becomes a fitting completion and consummation of the mysteries of the life of Christ already commemorated during the year, and before celebrating the triumph of All the Saints we proclaim and extol the glory of Him who triumphs in all the saints and in all the elect.

Q. *What will be the fruits of that conviction of Christ's*

Kingship to which the annual celebration of this feast will lead?

A. The conviction that to Christ, as King, is given all power in heaven and on earth will make Christ reign in our minds, which should adhere with perfect submission and firm unwavering belief to the revealed truths and to the doctrines of Christ; will make Christ reign in our wills, which should obey the laws and precepts of God; will make Christ reign in our hearts to the exclusion of all inordinate desires; will make Christ reign in our bodies and in our members, which should serve as instruments towards the interior sanctification of our souls, or as the Apostle Paul says: "as instruments of justice unto God" (Rom. vi. 13).

Q. *How does the Mass "Dignus" express the idea of the Kingship of Christ?*

A. In the Collect we pray that the whole world be subject to the most gentle sway of Christ, the King of the Universe

In the Gospel, Pilate asks: "Are You the King of the Jews?" and Christ replies: "My Kingdom is not of this world." Pilate again asks: "Art thou a king then?" Christ replies: "Thou sayest I am a king. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice."

In the Preface we return thanks "to Thee, Eternal God, Who anointedst with the oil of gladness Thine only-begotten Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, eternal Priest and universal King; that offering Himself up on the altar of the Cross, an immaculate and pacific Victim, He might accomplish the mysteries of man's Redemption; and, subjecting all creatures to His rule, might deliver over to Thy boundless Majesty an eternal and universal Kingdom, the Kingdom of Truth and of life, the Kingdom of holiness and of grace, the Kingdom of justice, of love, and of peace."

Our Blessed Lady

Q. *What are the most ancient feasts of Our Blessed Lady?*

A. The Nativity (8th September), the Annunciation (25th March), and the Assumption (15th August).

The date of the Feast of the Annunciation (called at one time the *Conceptio Christi*, the Conception of Christ) has been determined by the date of Christmas, the Birthday of Our Lord.

Q. *How does the Church honour the Mother of God throughout the year?*

A. Allowing for an inevitable overlapping of events the Church presents to us the drama of Our Lady's life in its entirety and in its chronological order from her Immaculate Conception (8th December) to her Assumption.

Q. *Trace in brief outline the movement of that drama.*

A. From the first moment of her Conception Our Lady, through the foreseen merits of her Divine Son, was freed from the stain of original sin, and the Church rejoices in this singular privilege: "Thou art the glory of Jerusalem. . . . Thou art fair, O Mary, and the stain original is not in thee" (Gradual). Mary is, thus, the model of purity, and we pray in the Collect that we "made pure by her intercession may attain to God."

Her Nativity is said to be the "beginning of salvation" (Collect).

Her Presentation in the Temple when she made a vow of perpetual virginity is celebrated on 21st Nov.

On the Feast of the Annunciation the burden of the Mass is the Angelic salutation, "Hail (Mary) full of grace, the Lord is with thee" (the Gospel and the Offertory).

Closely related to the events of the Annunciation is

the Feast of the Visitation (2nd July), commemorating her visit to her cousin, St. Elizabeth, and the inspired utterance of the "*Magnificat*" (Gospel).

Her Compassion is celebrated on the Friday of Passion Week, so that in company with Mary we may stand at the foot of the Cross. The Sequence of this Mass, *Stabat Mater Dolorosa*, "At the Cross her station keeping, stood the mournful mother weeping," is ascribed to Jacopone da Todi, a Franciscan. Its fine pathos and exquisite tenderness are singularly appropriate to Passiontide.

There is a second Feast of the Seven Dolours assigned to 15th September, which owes its origin to the Order of the Servites of Mary. It was extended to the universal Church by Pope Pius VII on the occasion of his liberation from captivity under Napoleon I.

When the earthly life of Our Lady was over she was assumed into Heaven, and the Church celebrates her glorious triumph in probably the oldest of her feasts, on the 15th August, the Feast of her Assumption. The Introit bids us all rejoice in the Lord, celebrating a festal day in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for whose Assumption the Angels rejoice and give praise to the Son of God. "Rejoice that she reigneth for ever with Christ" (Antiphon of the Magnificat).

Q. Why is the Gospel of Martha and Mary chosen for the Feast of the Assumption?

A. Martha represents the active life, Mary Magdalen the contemplative, and Mary the Mother of God is the most perfect example of both the active and the contemplative life. This is the more common explanation. A recent writer in the *Ephemerides Theologicæ Lovaniensis* (Jan., 1926) suggests another:

This Gospel extract was long regarded as specially appropriate to Holy Women and more particularly to

Virgins from the words, "Mary hath chosen the best part," *i.e.* totally dedicated herself to God. The opening words of the Epistle apply to virginity, too, "I shall abide in the inheritance of the Lord" being a mystic commentary on the words, "best part."

Hence the pericope was specially proper to the Virgin of Virgins, and was chosen for her Assumption from an ancient belief dating back to the 2nd century in the association of moral incorruption and physical incorruption.

Q. *Mention some other remarkable feasts of Our Lady?*

A. The Feast of the Holy Name of Mary (12th September), established in thanksgiving for the victory over the Turks outside Vienna (12th September, 1683).

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Rosary (7th October), established by St. Pius V in thanksgiving for the victory of Lepanto (7th October, 1571).

The Commemoration of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel (16th July), the Feast of the Brown Scapular.

The Apparition of the Blessed Mary Immaculate (11th February)—the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes commemorates the first of the eighteen apparitions of Our Blessed Lady to Blessed Bernadette in 1858. Lourdes has become the most glorious shrine of all Christendom in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Nowhere has she given greater manifestations of her power and of her love.

The Cultus of the Saints

Q. *What is the history of the "cultus" of the Saints?*

A. During and after the period of the persecutions the *martyrs* were honoured in the liturgy of the Church. Mass was said by, on, or over their tombs on the

anniversary of their death, or rather of their birthday in heaven. The cult was at first local and afterwards developed throughout the whole Church. The cult of the *Apostles* developed in a similar way.

In the 5th century the cult of *Confessors* arose, that is, of those, who did not actually die for the faith, but who suffered for the faith or who practised virtue in a heroic degree. The first of these confessors was St. Martin of Tours (+ 400), over whose tomb his successor in the bishopric erected a memorial chapel.

There are two classes of confessors, viz., *Confessor Pontiff*, one who was a bishop, and *Confessor non-Pontiff*, one who was not a bishop. From either of these classes may come the *Doctors*, those who have been singled out for their defence of the teaching of the Church.

The women saints are divided into *Virgins* (those who have consecrated their life to God in taking a vow of Chastity) and into *Holy Women* (who have sanctified themselves in the married state).

There is a further division of women saints into *Virgin Martyrs* and *Holy Women Martyrs*.

St. Joseph

Q. *When did devotion to St. Joseph develop in the Church?*

A. The first faint traces of it are discernible in the 9th century. Once well begun it spread rapidly through the influence of the Carmelites and Franciscans, of individual saints and of Jean Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris.

The first and primary Feast of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary (19th March), was established by Sixtus IV (+ 1484), and the second, the Solemnity

of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Confessor and Patron of the Universal Church, which now falls on the Wednesday following the Second Sunday after Easter, was established in 1847.

The Introit of the primary feast brings out the holiness of St. Joseph, "a just man . . . planted in the house of the Lord." The Collect emphasises and invokes his powerful intercession, while the Preface exalts the dignity conferred on him "who, a righteous man, was given by Thee to be the spouse of the Virgin Mother of God ; who, a faithful and wise servant, was set over Thy family, that with a father's care he should guard Thine only begotten Son conceived by the Holy Ghost, Jesus Christ Our Lord."

The second feast (the Solemnity of St. Joseph) sets forth the power of his protection and makes earnest petition for his intercession on our behalf. "Obtain for us, Joseph, grace to lead an innocent life : and may our life be ever shielded by the patronage" (Alleluiatic verse).

INDEX

Absolution, 185.
Adoration, 255.
—— of the Cross, 255.
Advent, 205.
Agatha, St., 134.
Agnes, St., 134.
Agnus Dei, 140, 150, 151.
Aisle, 20.
Alb, 50.
Alexander I, St., 134.
Alleluia, 75.
Alleluiatic Verse, 75.
All Souls' Day, 183.
Altar, in Early Christian times, 22.
— — charts, 31.
—— cloths, 43.
—— cover, 31.
—— cross, 26, 30.
—— fixed, 23.
—— material of, 23.
—— of Repose, 245, 258.
—— orientation of, 19.
—— ornaments of, 25.
—— papal, 32.
—— portable, 23.
—— position of, 24.
—— privileged, 32.
—— relics of, 24.
—— steps of, 25.
—— stone, 23.
—— stripping of, 245.
—— symbolism of, 24.
—— titular of, 25.
Altars (number of), 24.
Ambo, 33, 94.
Ambrosian (rite), 13.
Amen, 138.
Amice, 49.
Anacletus, St., 119.
Anamnesis, 127.
Anagolaium, 50.
Anastasia, St., 134, 209.
Angel (Holy), 130 (footnote).
Anniversary (Mass), 182.
Annunciation, 296.
Antipendium, 26.
Antiphonary, 78.
Apostles, 119, 299.
Apse, 20.
Archbasilica, 18.
Archbishop, 16, 68.
Ascension (Feast), 278.
Ashes, 228.
Ash Wednesday, 222, 227–8.
Asperges, 82.
Aspergillum, 40.
Aspersorium, 40.
Assumption, 297.

Baldakin (Baldacchino), 27.
Baptistery, 33.
Basilica, 17, 18.
Bell, church, 34, 244, 271.
—— Sanctus, 40, 125, 244, 271.
Biretta, 58.
Bishop, 3, 61, 101, 115, 122, 127.
Blessed Virgin Mary, 119, 296–7.
Blessed Sacrament, reservation of, 29, 30.
Blessing of ashes, 222.
—— bell, 34.
—— Bishop, 167.
—— candles, 214.
—— font, 282.
—— grains of incense, 262.
—— new fire, 261.
—— oil of Catechumens, 247.
—— oil of Chrism, 247.
—— oil of Sick, 246.
—— palms, 236.
—— Paschal candle, 263.
—— Priest, 167.
—— sacred linen, 44.
—— sacred vessels, 38.
—— the Mass, 167.

Boat (incense), 40.
Bolsena, 290.
Books (liturgical), 74.
Bread (symbolism of), 102.
Breaking of Bread, 3, 145.
Bugia, 68.
Burse, 45.
Buskins, 61.

Calotte, 67.
Candidates for Ordination, 101.
Candles, Blessing of, 215.
Candle, Paschal, 263.
Candlestick, 30, 31.
—— seventh, 178.
Canon (book), 80.
—— (of the Mass), 112 *sqq.*, 138.
Canopy, 40.
Cappa magna, 66.
Cappa parva, 66.
Cardinal (feast), 213.
Cassock, 58.
Catechumen, 83, 86, 220, 224.
Cathedral, 16.
Cecilia, St., 134.
de Celano Tomassa, 180.
Celebrant (of High Mass), 173.
Ceremoniale Episcoporum, 119.
Ceremonies of faithful at Mass, 191.
Chalice, 36, 289.
—— offering of, 103, 104.
Chapter, 16.
Chasuble, 53.
—— folded, 58.
Choir, 20.
Chrismale (chrism-cloth), 46.
Christus, 239.
Christmas, 208.
—— three Masses of, 209.
Chrysogonus, St., 119.
Chronista, 239.
Church, classification of, 16.
—— basilica, 17, 18.
—— bell, 34, 244, 271.
—— cathedral, 16.
Church, collegiate, 17.
—— conventual, 17.
—— definition of, 15.
—— metropolitan, 16.
—— patriarchal, 16.
—— primatial, 16.
—— significance of, 15.
Ciborium (Kiborian), 26.
—— (pyx), 38.
Cincture, 57.
Circumcision Feast, 210.
Clappers, 244.
Clavi, 57.
Clement, St., 119.
Cletus, St., 119.
Collect, 91, 284.
Colours, liturgical, 48–9.
Commemoration, 93.
—— of the Dead, 131, 132.
—— of the Living, 116.
Commune Sanctorum, 75–6.
Communicantes, 118, 119.
Communio antiphon, 160–1, 226.
Communion of the Faithful, 154.
—— cloth, 45.
—— of the Priest, 153.
—— under two species, 156.
—— under one species, 157.
—— rail, 32.
Companions of Christ, 210.
Complenda, 162.
Confessional, 33.
Confessor, 299.
Confiteor, 10, 154.
Confirmation, 282.
Conopeum, 28.
Consecration, 123–5.
Consecratio, 149.
Cornelius, St., 119.
Corporal, 42.
Corpus Christi, 289.
Corpus tuum, 159.
Cosmas and Damien, SS., 120.
Credence, 32.
Creed (Nicene), 98.
Crosier, 64.

Cross, sign of, 8, 97, 129, 137, 143.
—— archiepiscopal, 71.
—— of altar, 26, 30.
—— pectoral, 62.
—— processional, 41.
—— unveiling of, 256.
Cruets, 39.
Cult (of Saints), 299.
Cycle, Christmas, 205.
—— Paschal, 216.
Cyprian, St., 119.

Dalmatic, 56.
Dead (Mass of the), 150, 165, 180.
—— Commemoration of the, 132.
Deacon, 56, 173.
Deo Gratias, 94, 170.
De Profundis, 170, 186.
Dies Dominica, 201.
Dies Iræ, 97, 180–1, 184.
"Dignus" (the Mass), 293–5.
Diptychs, 116–17.
Doctor, 299.
Dominical, 157.
Dominicum, 84.
Dominica in albis, 276.
Domine Jesus Christe (Prayer), 152.
Domine, non sum dignus, 153.
Dominus vobiscum, 88, 161.
Double (rite), 287.
Doxology, major, 91.
—— minor, 91.
Dry (Mass), 86.

Early Christians, 3, 4, 140.
Easter, 274.
Eastertide, 272.
Eastern Uniats, 12.
—— Rites, 12.
Ecce lignum crucis, 255.
Elevation of Host, 125.
—— of Chalice, 126.
—— little, 135.
Ember (weeks), 202.
Enkolpia, 62.
Eostra, 273.
Epiklesis, 123, 131; and footnote.
Epiphany, 211, 212, 285.
Epistle, 94, 173, 202.
Epistolary, 78.
Exequial Mass, 183.
Exsultet (Paschal Praise), 264.
Extra-liturgical (music), 188.

Faithful, Mass of the, 86, 99.
—— offering of the, 100.
—— prayer of the, 253–4.
Falda, 72.
Faldstool, 68, 178.
Fanon, 72.
Fanons, 62.
Fast, 221.
Feasts, 286.
Felicitas, St., 134.
Ferial, 201, 222, 287.
Fermentum, 146–7.
Fire, Blessing of New, 261.
Forty (sacred number), 222.
Fractis panis, 145.
Friday, 201.
Funeral, offerings, 101.
—— service, 185.

Gaudete Sunday, 89, 206.
Gelasian (Sacramentary), 78.
Genuflection, 8.
Gloria in excelsis, 91, 206, 244.
Gloria, laus, 237.
Gloria Patri, 91, 231.
Gloves, 63–4.
Golden Rose, 270.
Good Friday, 143, 221, 250.
Good Shepherd Sunday, 276.
Gospel, 97, 168–9, 173.
Gospel group, 175.
Gradine, 31.
Gradual, 94.
Graduale, 78.

Grains of Incense, Blessing of, 262.
Gremial (veil), 65.
Gregorian (Sacramentary), 78.

Haec commixtio, 150.
Hanc igitur, 120.
Hands, imposition of, 121.
Hearse, 241.
Holy Things, 8.
Holy Thursday, 135, 243.
Holy Water, 8, 82.
Holy Week, 234 *sqq.*
Holy Women, 299.
Humerale, 71.
Humeral veil, 46.
Hypapante, 214.

Ignatius, St., of Antioch, 133.
Immaculate Conception, 207, 296.
Imposition of hands, 121.
Improperia (Reproaches), 236–7.
Incensation, 175–7.
Incense, grains of, 262.
Infra actionem, meaning of, 117.
Innocent III, 282.
In Paradisum, 185, and footnote.
Insignia of Bishop, 61.
—— Archbishop, 68.
—— Pope, 71.
In spiritu humilitatio, 104–5.
Introit, 89, 90.
Ite, Missa est, 83, 164–5, 173.

Jacopone da Todi, 297.
Jesus Christ, King, Feast of, 293.
John the Evangelist, St., 210.
—— Gospel of, 169.
John the Baptist, St., 105, 132, 207.
John and Paul, SS., 120.
John Eudes, St., 292 (footnote).
Judica Psalm, 88, 169, 232.
Juliana of Liège, Blessed, 290.

Kiborion (*v.* ciborium).
Kiss of Peace, 151.
Kyrie, eleison, 90, 173, 204, 271.

Lætare Sunday, 270.
Langton, Stephen, 282.
Lamp, Sanctuary, 29.
Latin (language of liturgy), 14.
Last Gospel, 168–9.
Lauda Sion, 97.
Lavabo, 105.
Lawrence, St., 119, 171.
Lent—definition, origin, purport, 219 *sqq.*
—— Fast of, 221; Ferials of, 223, 226; Sundays of, 226, 228–231; Masses of, 225.
Leonine (Sacramentary), 78.
Lessons (*Lectiones*), 94.
Libera (Embolism), 142, 258.
Libera (Antiphon), 185.
Linus, St., 119.
Litany of the Saints, 269.
—— major, minor, 277.
Little Elevation, 138.
Liturgical—Books, 78; Colours, 48, 49; Feasts, 8, 196; linen, 42; languages, 13; prayer, 7; vessels, 36; vestments, 47, 61; worship, 2; year, 197.
Liturgy—definition, 1, and private prayer, 6.
—— and popular devotions, 6.
—— its pre-eminence, 7.
—— spirit of, how acquired, 9.
Low Mass, 85.
Low Sunday, 276.
Lucy (Lucia), St., 134, 202.
Lunette 38.

Mandatum, 248–9.
Maniple, 52.
Mantelletta, 67.
Mantellone, 67.
Marcellinus, St., 134.
Margaret Mary, St., 109, 292.
Martyr, 299.
—— relics of, 24.
Martyrology, 80.
Mass, origin of word, 83, and footnote.
—— Anniversary, 182.
—— "Common," 180.
—— Dry, 86.
—— Gregorian, 186.
—— High, 84, 173.
—— importance of, 137; kinds of, 84.
—— "living the," 5.
—— Low, 85.
—— of the Dead, 180.
—— Papal, 84, 179.
—— Pontifical, 84, 177–8.
—— "praying the," 5.
—— Station, 90, 223.
—— Votive, 77.
Matthias, St., 113, 134.
Memento of the Living, 116.
—— of the Dead, 131–2.
Memoriale Rituum, 80.
Mingling of the Species, 149.
Missa Cantata, 84, 177.
—— *Quotidiana*, 180.
—— *Sicca*, 86.
—— *de Requiem*, 180, 192.
Missal, 74.
Miserebitur (Mass), 292–3.
Mitre, 62.
Monstrance, 39.
Morse, 67.
Mortuary chapel, 33.
Mozarabic (rite), 13.
Music, Sacred, 187–8.

N.N. of Memento, 116.
Nativity of Our Blessed Lady, 296–7.
Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ (*v.* Christmas).
Nave, 20.
—— lateral, 20.
Nicene Creed, 98.
Nobis quoque peccatoribus, 132.

"O's" of Advent, 207.
Oblation, *v.* offering, 103.
Occursus Domini, 214.
O'Connell, Daniel, 152.
Octave, 287.
Offerings of the Faithful, 100.
—— funeral, 101.
Offertory, 99, 100 *sqq*.
Oil of chrism, 246–7, 248.
—— Catechumens, 247, 248.
—— Sick, 135, 246.
Olive (branches), symbolism of, 237.
Ombrellino, 40.
Omophorion, 71.
Orarium, 53.
Orate fratres, 105, 106.
Oratory, definition of, 18.
—— public, 19.
—— semi-public, 19.
—— private, 19.
Oratio ad complendam, 162.
Oratio imperata, 93.
Oratio super diptycha, 116.
Oratio super oblata, 100, 107.
Ordinary (of the Mass), 74.
Organ, 34.
Osculatorium, 40.

Pacificale, 40.
Pænula, 54.
Pall, 43, 45.
Pallium, 69–71.
Palm-branches, symbolism of, 237.
—— Sunday, 235.
Palmatorium, 68.
Panem cœlestem, 153.
Papal (Altar), 32.
—— (Mass), 179.
—— (Insignia), 72.

Parascene, 250–1.
Parochial (Church), 17.
Pasch, 274.
—— Christian, 250.
Paschal Candle, 263–4.
—— Cycle, 216.
—— Praise, 264.
Passion, singing of, 238.
Passiontide, 231.
—— liturgy of, 231.
Paten, 37, 144, 146.
Pater noster, 141–2.
Pax, 151.
Peace, kiss of, 151.
—— instrument of, 40.
—— prayer for, 152.
—— connotation of, 144.
Pectoral (cross), 62.
Per ipsum, etc., 137.
Per quam haec omnia, 137.
Perceptio (prayer), 153.
Pentecost, 280.
—— Sundays after, 283.
—— Vigil of, 282.
Perpetua, St., 134.
Peter, St., M., 134.
Pileolus, 59.
Placeat (prayer), 166.
Pontifex, 179.
Pontifical, 79.
—— Mass, 177–8.
Popule meus, 257.
Portable (altar), 23.
Post-communion, 92, 161.
Predella, 25.
Preface, 108–111.
Presanctified, Mass of the, 257.
Precious Blood, Communion of the, 154, 158.
Presbyterium, 20.
Priest, 124.
Procession of Palms, 235.
—— with candles, 204.
Proprium de Tempore, 75.
—— *Sanctorum*, 75–76.
Prose, 96.
Quadragesima, 217.
Quam oblationem, 122, 131.
Quarter-Tense, 201–3.
—— of Advent, 208.
Quasimodo, 89.
Quinquagesima, 217.
Quod ore sumpsimus, 159.

Relics (of altar), 24.
Repast (Sacrificial), 139, 140.
Reproaches (*v.* Improperia).
Requiem (*Missa de*), 183.
Requiescant in pace, 165–6.
Retable, 31.
Ring, 64.
Rite, Catholic, 11.
—— Eastern, 11, 12.
—— Western, 11, 12.
—— double, 286–7.
—— semi-double, 286.
—— simple, 286.
Ritual, 79.
Rochet, 60.
Rogation (days), 277.
Rosary, Most Holy, Feast of, 297.
Rose (Golden), 270.

Sabbath, 200.
Sacred Heart, Feast of, 292.
Sacraments, 8, 135.
Sacramentals, 8, 135.
Sacramentary, 78.
Sacrifice of the Mass, 2, 4, 5, 8, 101, 105, 110, 125, 128, 137, 139.
Sacrificial gifts, 100, 102, 104, 115, 117, 122.
—— repast, 139, 140.
Sacristy, 35.
Saints, cultus of, 299.
—— Feasts of, 199.
—— Litany of, 269.
Sanctuary, 20.
—— lamp, 29.
Sancta, 145–6.

Sanctus, 110, 111.
—— bell, 40, 125.
Sandals, 61.
Saturday, 201.
—— of Quarter-Tense, 204.
Seal (of the Fisherman), 73.
Secret, 92, 100, 107.
Sedes gestatoria, 73.
Semi-double, 287.
Septuagesima, 216–17.
— - liturgy of, 217.
Sequence, 96, 97.
Sermon, 98.
Sexagesima, 217.
Sign (of the Cross), *v.* Cross.
Simple (rite), 297.
Sitientes, 231.
Soutane, 58.
Stabat Mater, 97, 297.
Station Mass, 223.
St. Stephen, 133, 210.
Stole, 52, 53.
Stolone, 58.
Subcinctorium, 72.
Sub-deacon, 174.
Succentor, 229.
Succursal, 17.
Sunday, 200, 201.
Sundays, after Easter, 276.
—— after Epiphany, 213.
—— after Pentecost, 282.
—— classification of, 287.
—— in Lent, 228.
—— of Advent, 207.
Supra quæ, 128.

Tabernacle, 28, 29.
—— veil (conopeum), 28.
Taille, de la, 131 (footnote).
Te igitur, 115.
Tenebræ, 240–1.
Thanksgiving, 109.
—— after Communion, 159.
—— after Mass, 171.
Theodolf of Orleans, 237.
Thomas Aquinas, St., 83, 123, 129, 164 (footnotes too), 290.
Throne, 68.
Thurible, 39.
Tiara, 72, 73.
Tract, 96.
Traditio Symbolorum, 270.
Transept, 20.
Trinity, Most Holy, Feast of, 288.
Trisagion, 257.
Tunic, 57.
Tunicles, 62.

Unde et memores, 127.

Veil, gremial, 65.
—— humeral, 46.
—— of chalice, 45.
—— of ciborium, 38.
—— of monstrance, 39.
—— of tabernacle, 28.
Veni Sancte Spiritus, 97, 281–2.
Vespers, 162, 271.
Vesper cloth, 31–2.
Vessels (liturgical or sacred), 36
Vestments (liturgical), 47.
Vexilla Regis, 232.
Victimæ Paschale, 97, 270, and footnote.
Vigil, 259, 260, 282.
Virgins, 299–300.

Washing of hands, 105.
—— of liturgical linen, 45.
Water, symbolism of, 104.
—— holy, 8.
Wednesday, 201.
—— of Quarter-Tense, 204.
Week, the Christian, 200.
—— Holy, 234.
Widows (Holy Women), 299.
Wine, symbolism of, 102, 104.
Wipo, 270.

Xystus, St., 120.

Year, Liturgical, 193 *sqq*.

Zimarra, 67.
Zuchetto, 67.

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